

WORKERS' TRUTH

Dedicated to the
Construction of the
International Party of
Revolutionary Workers
(Fourth International)

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A Revolutionary Marxist View of America's Constitutional Crisis



Middle East

'73 Contracts

South America

RSL

Racial Oppression

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9/23/74

November 7, 1917:

Workers' Revolution!

Fifty-six years ago this month, on November 7, 1917 (Oct. 25 according to the old calendar then in use in Russia) capitalist society was shaken to the roots by one simple fact: The workers had taken power in Russia! Led by the revolutionary Bolshevik Party the Russian working class had overthrown the capitalist Provisional Government of Alexander Kerensky. The workers had been in the forefront of the struggle to overthrow the Tsar, which was finally successful in March (February) of 1917 putting the reins of political power in the hands of the capitalist class. Through the spring and summer the Russian workers came to realize that the Provisional Government, like the Tsar, was their enemy. They would be oppressed, exploited and imprisoned just as they had been under the Tsar's regime. Finally on Nov. 7 the workers of Petrograd and the surrounding area, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, stormed the Winter Palace and arrested the members of the Provisional Government, the police and the top officials of the capitalist army. The capitalist state had been toppled and the red banner of the proletarian dictatorship, the workers' republic, was hoisted in Russia. Leon Trotsky, who was one of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party at that time, describes the storming of the Winter Palace in this way in his *History of the Russian Revolution*:

Workers, sailors, soldiers are pushing up from outside in chains and groups, flinging the junkers from the barricades, bursting through the court, stumbling into the junkers on the staircase, crowding them back,

toppling them over, driving them upstairs. Another wave comes on behind. The square pours into the court. The court pours into the palace, and floods up and down stairways and through corridors.

However, the glory of the Russian Revolution was shortlived. Russia was a backward country and desperately needed help from a victorious revolution in the advanced industrial West, or the workers' republic would perish. Help did not come. The revolution in Germany failed and it appeared that Russia would be left on its own to face the hostility of world imperialism. As this occurred, the leaders of the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky included, became demoralized. They grasped at straws in desperation trying to keep the revolution alive. However, in their groping for an answer, they unwittingly betrayed the Russian workers. They lost faith in both the capabilities of the Russian workers to lay the foundations for communism and of the European workers to make a revolution. Instead they brought back capitalism, hoping to develop the Russian economy by use of the old methods. However, what Lenin and Trotsky hoped was only a retreat to save the revolution was actually the death blow to the fledgling workers' republic.

Nevertheless, the period from 1917-1921 stands out as an example for workers all over the world, just as the Paris Commune had shone forth as a beacon for workers' struggles in 1871. Today, we must finish what the Parisian workers in 1871 and the Russian workers in 1917 began: the construction of the worldwide workers' republic!

LONG LIVE THE PARIS COMMUNE!
LONG LIVE THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION!
WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

continued on page 38

In This Issue

Editorial: November 7, 1917: Workers' Revolution.....PAGE 1

American Capitalism's Constitutional Crisis
by David Ross.....PAGE 3

Aftermath of the Mideast War.....PAGE 8

The Origins of Racial Oppression
by Aaron Asher.....PAGE 12

Marxism and South America (Part One): General Development
by Ron Albertson....PAGE 16

Trade Unions Today: 1973 Contracts are Bureaucratic Sellouts
by Ron Albertson...PAGE 20

Revolutionary Perspectives in the Middle East (Part Four)
by David Ross.....PAGE 22

*Archives of the Revolution: November 7, 1917 Proclamation of the
Soviet Government*.....PAGE 30

RSL and the Fight for Leninism.....PAGE 31

Fight for Socialism!.....PAGE 38

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American Capitalism's Constitutional Crisis

by David Ross



The political crisis of American capitalism is personified by the man on the right.

Hear the name Richard Nixon and what do you think of? Most likely one or more of the various facets of America's most thoroughgoing constitutional crisis since Andrew Johnson was impeached for disregarding Congress after the American Civil War will come to mind. Although this crisis goes by the name Watergate, far more has come to light than the simple break-in job

at Democratic Party headquarters. So much has been exposed to the American public that the capitalist class is indeed upset. All of the filth, corruption and depravation that is capitalist politics has come out into the open. Through a variety of stupid moves and blunders by Nixon and his cronies and a bit of overzealous party politics (to the point of almost forgetting that the

capitalists can afford only so much exposure) have melted away the sugar-coated phrases about freedom, democracy and the will of the voters and popular mandates. It is as if the working class had managed to sneal into the attic and catch a glimpse of the "picture of Dorian Gray" revealing the cancerous rot of capitalist reality.

Just when it appeared that interest in the Wat-

ergate scandal was beginning to wane with the Nixon-Kissinger engineered detente with Russia and the outbreak of a war in the Middle East. The whole bourgeois boondoggle erupted again in October in a far more critical fashion than it had to date. The main events of October were: 1) Vice-president Agnew resigned and pleaded no contest to tax fraud charges in the face of public exposal of bribes and kickbacks he had received while Governnor of Maryland; 2) Nixon proposed a compromise to Special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox that rather than give up the tapes of his discussion (which the Court had demanded) he would provide summaries of all the "important sections". Cox refused the compromise after announcing he would press for the tapes; 3) Nixon fired Cox for insubordination claiming that since Cox was an executive branch appointee and since Nixon had ordered him to stop pressing for the tapes, and since Cox had refused, i.e. disobeyed the President's orders he had to go. 4) Attorney General Elliot Richardson considered to be one of Nixon's staunchest supporters resigned in protest of the firing of Cox; 5) Asst. Atty-General William J. Ruckelshaus another leading Nixon supporter, was fired by Nixon for refusing to fire Cox; 6) The AFL-CIO convention demanded that Nixon resign and that if he refused to resign that he be

impeached; 7) eight different bills on impeachment were given to the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee 8) Nixon gave up the tapes; 9) Nixon promised a new special "independent" Watergate prosecutor and called for "national unity"; 10) Two of the most important tapes, containing a conversation between Nixon and former Atty-General John Mitchell three days after the Watergate breakin and the April 18, 1973 discussion between Nixon and John Dean in which Dean claims that Nixon spoke of executive clemency for Watergater E. Howard Hunt have been reported "non-existent."

The Agnew affair was discussed in last month's Workers Truth (see Agnew in the Stew, Oct. '73 Workers Truth) Many bourgeois commentators felt that Agnew's problems were allowed to come into the open by Nixon in order to take the public's attention off of Nixon. If that were the case, it didn't work out so well. Agnew's departure leaves Nixon highly vulnerable on the impeachment question. Since the Senate has to approve the new Vice-President, they could force Nixon to appoint someone that the capitalist class feels could finish out Nixon's term and set bourgeois politics back on an even keel.

Nixon's choice for VP is Rep. Gerald Ford of Michigan. The Senate has yet to approve Ford's nomination. Ford is opposed by the AFL-Cio bur-

bureaucracy as being "anti-labor". Likewise even some "revolutionary" groups like the Workers League (which constantly tails the AFL-CIO bureaucrats) claim that Ford should not be VP because he is "anti-labor." Does anyone know of any capitalist politician who is pro-labor. It's one thing to talk about how great the American workers are and quite another to be on labor's side in the class struggle when capitalist politicians like Kennedy, Humphrey, Inouye, etc. talk about the greatness of the American labor movement, they aren't talking about the sit down strikes in auto in the Thirties. They're talking about the no-strike pledges and the acceptance of wage freezes, layoffs and speedup. What the capitalist politicians mean by a "great" working class is a servile working class, a working class that won't upset the applecart of production for profit / It makes absolutely no difference who is VP. There is no qualitative difference between any of the capitalist politicians. The capitalist state no matter who holds what office, will continue to be a tool of repression against the working class until day it is smashed by that working class and replaced with a proletarian state based on democratically elected workers' councils

The tapes question has played the biggest role in recent events relating to the Watergate scandal. Nixon's tape

recordings of White House conversations are considered to be a likely proof of Nixon's guilt or innocence in the Watergate affair. Nixon continually refused to give up the tapes even when ordered to do so by the courts. This led many to believe that there was incriminating evidence on the tapes. The general conclusion was that Nixon wanted to keep himself from being indicted more than he was interested in maintaining the principle of privacy and executive privilege. When Nixon fired Cox and Ruckelshaus and Richardson resigned over the tapes question, Washington went up for grabs. Everyone from the AFL-CIO convention to the Democratic Party called on Nixon to resign and it was at this time that the multitude of impeachment resolutions were brought forward in the House of Representatives. It is generally agreed that the main reason for Nixon's firing of his own hand-picked Watergate prosecutor was not so much the tapes as it was the fact that Cox was getting hot on the trail of kickbacks to Nixon from the dairy industry in return for exorbitant price hikes and anti-trust suit manipulation in favor of billionaire scum Howard Hughes and the well-known ITT. This is entirely plausible because under the massive pressure to resign or be impeached, Nixon agreed to turn over the tapes and appoint a new prosecutor.

Why not rehire Cox? Ask Nixon. When Nixon agreed to surrender the tapes to federal judge John J. Sirica, a hue and cry went up about "fixed" tapes. Surprisingly former Nixonite Ruckelshaus was in the lead in "warning" the public that the tapes may have been tampered with in order to absolve Nixon of any blame for Watergate or its coverup. But "Tricky Dick" had a better one up his sleeve. The two most important tapes, with the Dean and Mitchell conversations, were said to not exist at all! The stories varied as to why they didn't exist, and the fact that Nixon said he didn't know when it turned out that he did, shot his credibility full of holes (which was a neat trick in itself since his credibility already had the consistency of a fishnet).

As things stand now Nixon's chances of remaining President are very slim. Chances are he won't last until next summer. This is especially likely since the congressional elections are being held next fall and the Republicans did very poorly in the mayoral elections this year. It is perfectly clear that Nixon has become an albatross around the neck of the Republican Party. This is stressed by the fact that Republican Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts has publicly called for Nixon's resignation and a Republican Senator from Colorado has called on the Republican Party to break with Nixon and to take no responsibility

for his actions. Several newspapers, including the New York Times, have published editorials calling for Nixon's resignation. Even a number of papers which supported Nixon in 1972 have called for his resignation. The capitalist newsweekly Time Magazine published its first editorial in history demanding that Nixon resign. Clearly Nixon's days in office are numbered and the number is quite a bit less than 1095.

The Watergate affair has had its effect not only on the capitalist class and Nixon, but also on the socialist left. A prime example of its effect can be seen in the Spartacist League (SL). The liberal pressure for impeachment has brought about a marked right turn on the part of the Spartacist League. In the 26 October issue of *Workers Vanguard*, newspaper of the SL, we find the following headline: "Impeachment is Not Enough!" Do these pseudo-Leninists then go on in their article to discuss the futility of attempting fundamental social change in the interests of the working class under the aegis of bourgeois democracy? Do they emphasize the necessity of intransigent working class struggle and socialist revolution as the *only* means of working class emancipation? No. In an article of 2000-2500 words the SL could not find room to *even mention* the necessity of working class socialist revolution as the only answer for the working class to the crisis that Watergate represents.

Instead they chose to brazenly tail after the liberals in a manner commonly associated with reformist tendencies like the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers League. The *Workers Vanguard* article is filled with reformist slogans for impeachment, new elections and a "workers party based on the trade unions."

However, the Spartacist League did not always have their present position on Nixon. After the Watergate affair broke this spring, the SL wrote in the 8 June issue of *Workers Vanguard*:

...in the absence of a mass revolutionary workers movement, even impeachment would only lead to a re-stabilization of bourgeois democracy.

For socialists to call today for impeachment of Nixon can only mean a desire to have another *bourgeois* (em. in orig.) ruler, whether Agnew or a liberal Democrat. (p. 11)

However, four months later with everybody and his brother demanding that Nixon step down, the SL does a complete flip-flop (that would do justice to any Olympic gymnast) and lands right on the tail-end of the liberal bandwagon with:

Socialists should support a congressional move to impeach Nixon.

What changed so drastically in the relationship of class for-

ces between June and October, Comrades of the Spartacist League? Where is your "mass revolutionary workers movement?" Was your analysis wrong in June or is "a congressional move to impeach Nixon" just a sloppy formulation for "the workers' struggle to overthrow capitalism through socialist revolution?"

In an attempt to straddle the fence between reform and revolution, the SL article is fraught with contradictions. For instance, after demanding no confidence in Congress or the courts the SL prints in capital letters:

PUBLISH THE 1970 SECRET POLICE PLAN! PLAY THE WATERGATE TAPES IN FULL ON NATIONWIDE RADIO!

Who should publish the plan (much of which can be found verbatim in back copies of the Chicago Tribune)? Who should play the tapes on the radio? And more importantly, who would listen?

The next gen which the SL comes up with is:

The deep distrust the American public now has for the government provides an excellent opportunity for a campaign to limit and weaken the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state.

The SL then goes on to demand that the FBI and CIA be abolished. Since the SL does not mention the necessity of *smashing* the capitalist state, only "limiting" it, it follows that the FBI and CIA would be abolished under the framework of the still-existing capitalist state. This is worthy of an Eduard Bernstein, but

not a Leninist.

The same holds true for the SL's demand that the standing army and officer corps be replaced with a "workers militia based on the trade unions." In the absence of a call for the destruction of the entire capitalist order, this slogan becomes nothing more than a reformist utopia.

After asserting their support to impeachment of Nixon by Congress (which they have just told us can't be trusted), the Spartacist League gives us another dose of bourgeois-democratic illusion-bolstering:

The removal of Nixon and choice of his successor must not be left to the "most exclusive club in the world"-- the U.S. Senate. The direct recall of elected officials is an essential democratic right. It will be a fundamental principle of socialist constitutionalism under a workers government (What about Trotsky's "The dictatorship does not base itself at every given moment on the formal principle of a workers democracy?--DR) FOR AN IMMEDIATE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION!

The masses of working class voters make no real decisions when they vote for President. No matter who is in office (even a labor party) the fact that the state is the instrument of the bourgeoisie, forces the President to act in the interests of that class or be dumped. Whether the workers vote or not, the choice still rests with the cap-

italist class, and will continue to rest there until they and their system have been swept away by working class revolution.

The Spartacist League makes its last (but by no means least) confusing of the nature of the bourgeois state with the following:

Forcing a new election would prove a hollow victory for the working class if it simply resulted in a "cleaner" Republican or Democratic president to carry out Nixon's basic policies--holding down wages by anti-labor laws in the face of unprecedented inflation; squandering American wealth and youth to support reactionary regimes throughout the world (such as Thieu's South Vietnam and Meir Dayan's Israel) instead of aiding the workers and peasants in the task of socialist construction. The construction of an alternative to the twin parties of capital must in the first instance be a fight also against their agents in the workers movement--the labor bureaucracy. **BREAK WITH THE REPUBLICANS AND THE DEMOCRATS--DUMP MEANY, WOODCOCK--FOR A WORKERS PARTY BASED ON THE TRADE UNIONS! FOR WARD TO A WORKERS GOVERNMENT!**

Even if SL national chairman James Robertson were elected President, it would be no victory for the working class. So long as the

capitalist state continues to exist, so long as workers are still chained to the factory bench by the bonds of wage slavery, until the working class has destroyed the capitalist system and asserted its own democratic control over the productive forces, there can be no victory for the working class. There can only be a series of holding actions (such as contract demands met by the bourgeoisie) until the final struggle of socialist revolution. No party in power under the present American governmental system can aid the workers and peasants of the world in the task of socialist construction. *The bourgeois state, because it is in the final analysis the instrument of the capitalist class, is organically incapable of aiding the working class.* This is apparently a fact that the leadership of the Spartacist League has forgotten.

Revolutionary Marxists, i.e. Bolshevik-Leninists view the Watergate crisis in a different manner. We do not view it within the reformist confines of capitalist democracy. Instead we view it as it relates to the fundamental struggle between classes. It is true that Nixon has bonapartist appetites and desires to institute a strong-man government. However, this is not what the American capitalists need at this time. The need for a bonapartist regime arises in the face of a strong political movement of the working class (and this does not mean running a "labor"

or "workers" party in capitalist elections). There is no such movement in the United States today. While there is grumbling and an openness to socialist ideas, the working class remains relatively docile. It need only be noted how the trade union bureaucracy was able to ram a series of blatantly sell-out contracts down the throats of the workers this year. In the absence of a revolutionary leadership rooted in the working class, any political movement will be co-opted by the purveyors of "democracy."

It must be made clear that the only solution for the working class is the destruction of the capitalist system through working class socialist revolution. This may sound sectarian to the Spartacist League, but revolutionary Leninism has always sounded sectarian to the opportunists. Impeachment of Nixon will solve nothing. The capitalist state will remain and another politician will take his place. A new election will solve nothing. The capitalist state will remain and the workers will be forced to choose between candidates who do not have their interests at heart and couldn't do anything about it once elected even if they did. A labor party will solve nothing. We have seen what workers parties based on the trade unions have done in Europe. Only when the working class unites in a mass revolutionary movement will it be able to free itself

continued on page 37

Aftermath of the Mideast War

Truce Shaky

No Winner

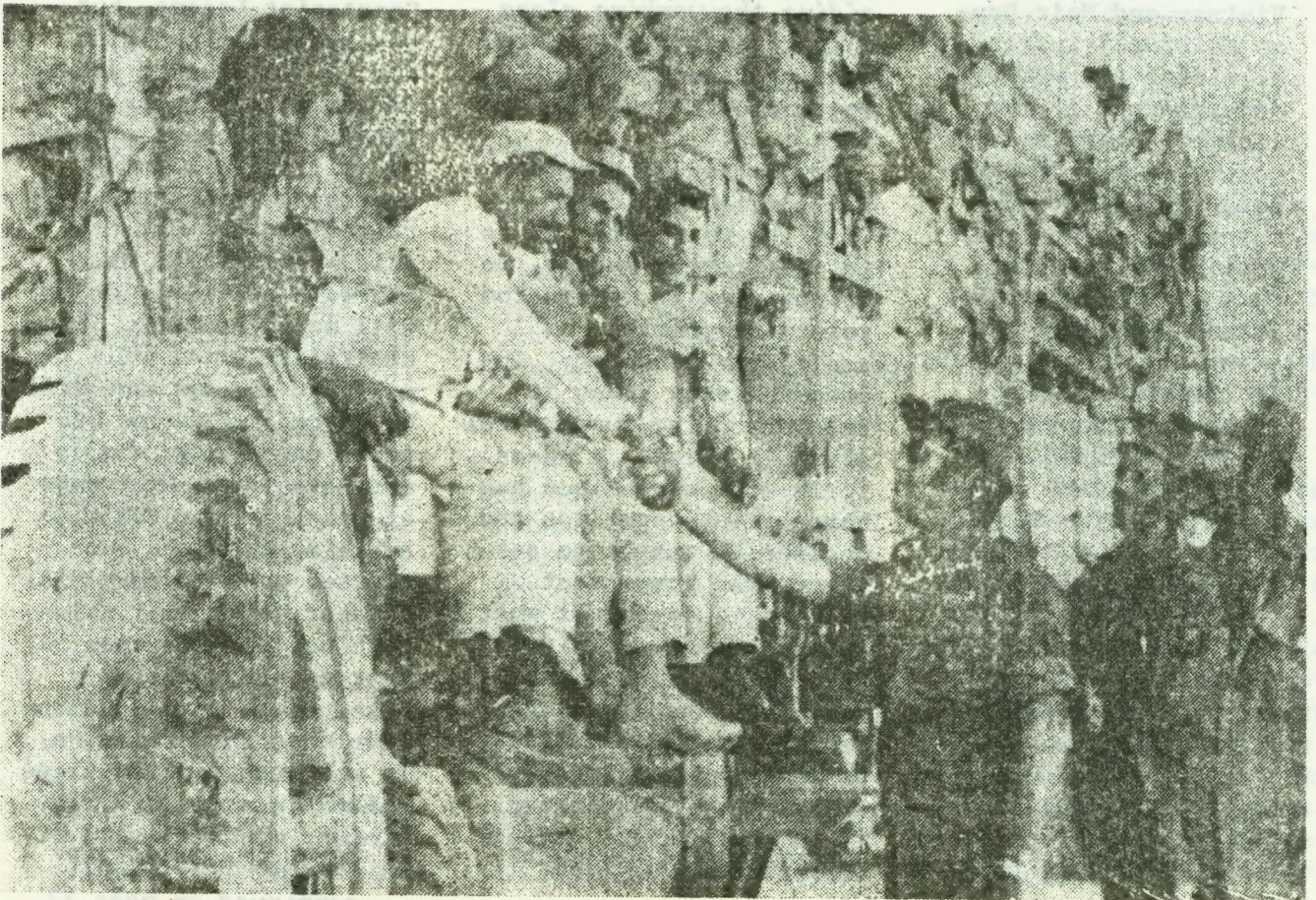
Workers are the Losers

After two weeks of bitter fighting in the Middle East, Israel, Syria and Egypt accepted a very shaky truce proposed by the United Nations Security Council. Originally the truce was set for Oct. 22, with Israel outside the Syrian city of Sasa, 20 miles from Damascus, and across the Suez Canal into Egypt. Egypt was on the east bank of the Suez on either side of

the Israeli bulge into Egypt and had broken through the much-touted defenses of the Bar-Lev line. Within hours of the announcement of the truce, both Egypt and Israel made moves to better their positions. When the smoke cleared on Oct. 24 and the truce was again introduced (this time with a little more success) Israel had managed to completely surround and cut off the Egyptian 3rd

Army and take possession of the town of Suez, 30 miles from Cairo.

Since the initiation of the truce and the arrival of United Nations "peacekeepers," the tension of the Middle East situation has not diminished. There have been several outbreaks of fighting between Egypt's surrounded 3rd Army and the Israeli forces. U.S. President Nixon put all American armed forces on alert in



Egyptian prisoner of war shakes hands with Israeli soldier. These men are not each other's enemy. The real enemy of Arab and Hebrew workers is capitalism and the Arab and Hebrew capitalists who thrive upon workers' exploitation.

response to alleged Russian moves to send their own "peacekeeping" force to the Middle East. This move, however, was considered by many to be just a ploy to draw attention away from Nixon's domestic troubles. The Egyptian government has consistently demanded that Israel withdraw to the Oct. 22 cease-fire line. This would free the Egyptian 3rd Army and for this reason Israel refuses to budge. It was only under pressure from the United States and Russia that Israel grudgingly allowed food, water, medical supplies and blood plasma to be brought through Israeli lines to the trapped Egyptians. While Egypt has been demanding that Israel remove the pressure from the 3rd Army before negotiations begin, Israel has been demanding that prisoners of war be exchanged before the two sides sit down at the negotiating table. In the meantime Egypt's rulers claim that Israel has refused to give the Arab countries a list of Arab POWs while the Egyptians have given the Israelis a list of Israeli POWs. Israel's rulers, of course, deny this. Who are we to believe? Those who lie in Hebrew? Or those who lie in Arabic? As the two sides bicker and refuse to negotiate they are also girding themselves for new war. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat has made statements to the effect that if Israel does not

withdraw to the Oct. 22 cease-fire lines, it will mean the necessity of a new all-out war, with both sides going for broke. This would please the Israeli rulers to no end. Since the cease-fire, the right-wing bourgeois Gahal party, led by former terrorist leader Menachem Beigin, has criticized the Meir-Dayan leadership of the Israeli government for being "taken by surprise" in the opening days of the war. Also, the Israeli capitalist parties as a whole have accused the UN of intervening to save Egypt and Syria from complete defeat. They feel that total victory was in their grasp (including probably annihilation of the Egyptian 3rd Army and marching Israeli troops into Cairo and Damascus as a show of strength) and then snatched away through the machinations of the United States and the USSR.

This brings into question why the war was fought in the first place. Two things must be made clear: One, the war was not fought in the interests of aiding the Palestinian masses who in large number live as refugees; two, it was not fought to defend the lives of the Hebrew working masses. The war was fought in the interests of the Hebrew and Arab capitalist classes, and in the interests of their imperialist sponsors, the United States and Russia. In no sense was the war fought in the interests of the working masses. The working class in Is-

rael had nothing to gain from the victory of "their" bourgeoisie. Likewise the workers in the Arab countries had nothing to gain from the victory of "their" bourgeoisies. Both the Hebrew and the Arab capitalists used their workers as cannon fodder to extend their own interests and those of their imperialist oil-hungry arms suppliers. According to official U.S. Government estimates, Israel's casualties totalled 4,000, while Arab losses were put at 16,000. If these figures are correct (and while they may be weighted one way or the other, the total is probably the minimum of casualties) that means that at least 20,000 workers and peasants were killed or wounded in less than a month for no reason but the struggle between different national capitalist blocs to get a bigger piece of the profit pie. Neither ruling class views the Arab workers and peasants in the "occupied territories" (Sinai Peninsula, Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip) as anything more than a supply of cheap labor. Despite their protestations to the contrary, the Arab capitalists have precisely the same things in store for the workers they claim to be "liberating" that these workers face at the hands of the Israeli state now.

Not only have the Hebrew and Arab workers paid with their blood on the battlefields, now that the war is "over" they will be forced to

pay the economic costs of the war. It is the Hebrew and Arab workers who will face speedup, wage cuts and layoffs to pay the U.S. and Russian imperialists for the armaments sold to their capitalist rulers. It is the Hebrew and Arab workers in Israel who will be forced to pay 7-9 per cent of their income in a forced war "loan" (never to be paid back, with or without interest). Already since the introduction of this "loan" an Israeli worker making \$8,000 year, takes home only \$2,000! It is the workers in the oil-rich Arab countries who will pay for the oil embargo on "nations supporting Israel" and the projected 25% cut in oil production. They will pay with rapidly rising unemployment and the prospect of seeing their already low standard of living pushed even lower.

After the initiation of the ceasefire, the Beirut newspaper Al Nahar published an alleged U.S.-USSR "peace" plan. This plan consisted of the following five points: 1) withdrawal of both sides to the Oct. 22 ceasefire lines; 2) return by Israel of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and Israeli withdrawal from the other "occupied territories"; 3) the creation of an "independent" Palestinian state consisting of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Arab sector of Jerusalem; 4) international (UN) occupation of the Golan Heights and Sharm el Sheikh in the Sinai

Peninsula as a means of "internationalizing" these areas and "keeping peace"; 5) immediate negotiations between the rulers of Israel and the Arab countries. This "peace plan" is simply another attempt on the part of the major imperialist powers to placate their warring children and dampen the possibilities of all-out imperialist war (which in the long run is impossible unless the working class destroys the capitalist system of war and wage-slavery once and for all), and to keep the working class in the area adequately policed. It is put forth in the hopes that the workers of the belligerent countries will not see it as a means of temporarily stabilizing their conditions of exploitation and that they will be blinded by the nationalism which their rulers strive to instill in them, and will be pleased that "their" nation got the best deal possible. However, as Marx and Engels wrote in *The Communist Manifesto*: "The working men have no country." As revolutionary Marxists we stand opposed to the "peace" of the imperialists, the "peace" of wage-slavery, unemployment, speedup and poverty, the "peace" of exploitation and oppression of the working class and the poor peasantry. **DOWN WITH THE "PEACE" PLAN OF THE EXPLOITERS! THE WORKERS WILL ONLY ACHIEVE PEACE THROUGH WORKERS' REVOLUTION!**

Despite the fact that the working class has nothing to gain from the wars and "peace" negotia-

tions of the capitalists, some socialist organizations, the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers League, support the Arab capitalists against Israel. Meanwhile many socialist tendencies who oppose both sides in the war do so in a confused manner. They do not oppose support to either side because *no* worker should support *any* capitalist war, but simply because they don't think that either side should be supported in *this* particular war. For instance, while the Spartacist League (SL) opposes support to either capitalist class in this war, it gives retroactive support to the Israeli capitalists in the 1948 war and to the Egyptian capitalists in the 1956 war. The SL attempts to gloss this over by saying that the workers should only have given military and not political support. Don't put your vote on the line, just your life! The Spartacist League is joined by its alter ego the Class Struggle League in demanding that the lands occupied by Israel in 1967 be returned to the Arab capitalists. Thus, these pseudo-revolutionaries give backhanded support to the claims of the Arab nationalists that Arab-speaking workers are better off if their exploiters speak Arabic rather than Hebrew. Meanwhile the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL) comes up with the position of claiming that it will defend the Arab capitalists against the im-

perialists and adding to that the utterly grotesque assertion that Israel (whose major exports are industrial diamonds and citrus fruit) is imperialist, and then turning around and saying that neither side deserves support. All we can say to the RSL is that they'd better get their positions together before they try taking them to the working class.

While the centrists muddle through their attempts to reconcile revolutionary Marxism with reformist nationalism, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Workers League (WL) make no bones about their blatant support to Arab capital.

The Workers League's international co-thinkers, the International Committee opened its statement on the Mideast war with:

The war in the Middle East, fought out by the armed forces of the Arab nations and Israel, is a war between imperialism and the Arab peoples, victims of centuries of colonial oppression and exploitation. There can be no question that the international working class must fight in solidarity with the Arab masses and their armies against the armies of Israel, puppets of imperialism. Meanwhile the Socialist Workers Party stated at a recent forum in Chicago that the primary contradiction in the Middle East is the strug-

gle between the Palestinian refugees and the Arab people as a whole on one hand and Israel, the cop of imperialism on the other. Thus, the SWP encourages support for the "anti-imperialist" struggle being waged under the aegis of Arab capital.

This capitulation to Arab nationalism, the firmest ideological support for the Arab capitalists (except possibly Islam), must be exposed and condemned. The Egyptian and Syrian armies are not the armies of the Arab masses as the Workers League claims. They are the armies of the capitalist states of Egypt and Syria, and just as the Israeli Defense Forces (the Israeli army) must be smashed by the working class, likewise the Egyptian, Syrian and all other Arab armies must be smashed by the workers.

Lenin analyzed imperialism as being not simply policies carried out by the advanced capitalist countries, but as *the highest stage of capitalism*. No act, no war, no property seizure can be anti-imperialist if it is not anti-capitalist. The Arab bourgeoisies can no more be anti-imperialist than the Hebrew bourgeoisie. To do so would mean to oppose capitalism, the fundamental basis for their class rule. Are the Arab regimes anti-imperialist? Was the Iraqi capitalists' seizure of American oil interests while leaving British and French interests (which were larger) intact anti-imperialist? Was the Iraqi capitalists' resumption of diplomatic relations

with the murderous Shah of Iran at the same time anti-imperialist? Was the blatant use of Iraqi troops as cannon fodder in Syria (so gross that this was mentioned even in the capitalist press) anti-imperialist? Was the Egyptian capitalists' call for American and Russian troops to come to the Mideast anti-imperialist? Is the Egyptian capitalists' support for oil drilling in the Nile delta by American oil firms (who will reap the bulk of the benefits from Egyptian oil workers) anti-imperialist? Is the Egyptian capitalists' resumption of diplomatic relations with the United States anti-imperialist? Not by any means. Only the independent movement of the working class against the capitalist class can be anti-imperialist. Anything less is just the attempt of semi-colonial capitalists to reap a larger share of the profits from the exploitation of their workers.

The main contradiction in capitalist society (and this includes the Middle East) is not foreign domination of a society vs. native domination, but capitalist domination of society vs. proletarian domination. By supporting their respective capitalists in the recent war, the Hebrew and Arab workers were put in the position of aiding in the prolongation of their subjection. Only the working class socialist revolution and the destruction of capitalism in the Middle East and throughout

continued on page 36

The Origins of Racial Oppression

by Aaron Asher

In understanding the origins of racial oppression, it is of crucial significance to realize that *the phenomenon had its rise only in modern times*. That is, that racial oppression developed among Europeans with the rise of capitalism and nationalism, and all rac-

ial antagonisms can be traced to the policies and attitudes of the leading capitalists of Europe and North America.

In order to demonstrate this let us review some historical situations. The Greeks were the first European people to enter the stream of eastern Mediterranean civilization, and the possibility of racial oppression did not really occur until the Macedonian conquest. In any case, we do not find any trace of racism, or racial oppression even in the great Hellenistic empire which entered deeper into the territories of non-white peoples than any other European empire up to the end of the fifteenth century.

The Hellenistic Greeks had a cultural, not a racial consciousness, so that their basic division of the peoples of the world was into Greeks and barbarians--barbarians having been

all those peoples who did not possess the Greek culture, especially its language. But the peoples of the Greek city-states, who founded colonies among the "barbarians" on the shores of the Black Sea and of the Mediterranean, welcomed those "Barbarians" to they extent that they were able to participate in Greek culture, and intermarried freely with them.

The experience of the later empire of Alexander the Great was directly contrary to modern racial antagonism. Every effort was made to assimilate the "barbarians" to Greek culture, and in turn was assimilated, producing a new Graeco-Oriental culture with a Graeco-Oriental ruling class. Alexander himself married a Persian princess and encouraged his men to intermarry with the native population.

Moreover, Alexander tended to ignore even cultural differences in his policies toward the people of his empire. This seemed to have been one of the prime factors in the development of Stoicism by the Greek philosopher Zeno about 300 B.C. Zeno taught that all men should be fellow citizens, and there should be one life and order, held together by a common law. This doctrine was not a reaction to racism, but rather mirrored the cultural distinctions among the peoples of the time.



Housing in Chattanooga's Black community

Let us next consider the Roman Empire, in this civilization we find--as in the Greek--no racial antagonism, but rather a cultural-class distinction. The basic distinction was Roman citizenship. Slaves came from every province, with total disregard of racial distinction. In many cases, the slaves--especially the Greeks--were the teachers. There was no racial barrier to social advancement, and anyone holding citizenship might rise to high positions in the government or economy.

From the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of Christianity, to the dawn of the Renaissance the nature of the movement and of the social contact of peoples in this area precluded the possibility of the development of racial oppression.

The general pattern of barbarian invasions was that of a succession of peoples of increasing cultural inferiority moving into areas of higher culture. Thus, the German tribes which invaded the Roman Empire had a smaller capacity for maintaining a complex culture than the Romans had when they conquered the Greeks. In the movement of barbarian peoples from the east and north toward the general area of the Mediterranean no nationalistic sentiments stood in the way to limit their amalgamation with the native populations.

In Europe, the poli-

cies of the Roman Catholic Church represented a bar to the development of racial antagonisms. The Church, which gradually attained more or less religious, economic and ideological dominance, had a folk and personal--not a territorial or racial--norm of belonging. The fundamental division of human beings was christian and non-christian. Among the "heathens, the "infidel" and the heretic were recognized by differential negative attitudes; however as a means of entering the Christian commune by conversion or recantation was freely allowed and even sought after. In the middle ages then, we find no racial antagonism in Europe; in fact, Europeans were, at this time, more isolated and ignorant about foreign peoples and world geography than the Romans and Greeks.

But gradually, under a commercial and religious impulse, Europe began to awaken and to journey toward strange lands. The first Crusade may be taken as the starting point which finally led to world dominance by Europeans. When after their travels in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, the Polos returned from the court of the great Kubla Khan in China to tell Europeans about the fabulous wealth of the Orient, they stimulated a great interest among traders. It was not until the discovery of America, however, that the movement assumed a decidedly irreversible trend. The

period between the first Crusade and the discovery of America continued to be characterized by the religious view of world order; but it set a pattern of dealing with non-christian peoples which was to be continued, minus only its religious characteristics, to this day. To the extent that the religious controls remained effective, racial antagonism did not develop; what really developed was a "Jewish-heathen-infidel" antagonistic complex which was to color European thought for some centuries.

Up until the eleventh century Christian Europe was hemmed in by these "heathens and infidels;" the Mediterranean was almost encircled by the Mohammedans, a people whose culture was superior to that of the northern Europeans. However, under the influence of the popes, the warriors of Christendom began to carry the Crusades into the territory of the "heathen" slavic and "infidel" Asiatic peoples.

In conjunction with the Crusades, we see the correspondent expansion of trade into these newly "conquered" areas. In fact, it was this need for trade with the East, especially by the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese merchants, which induced the Portuguese in the fifteenth century, to feel their way down the African coast in hope of sailing around the continent to the East Indies. It is important to

note that even at this time the white man had no conception of himself as being capable of developing the superior culture of the world.

Of more significance is the fact that there was as yet no belief in any cultural incapacity of the peoples of this area. Their conversion to christianity was sought, supposedly to make the Africans the human equals of all other christians.

This matter of cultural conversion is crucial for our understanding of the development of racial oppression for the full profitable exploitation of a people, the dominant group must devise ways and means of limiting that people's cultural assimilation. As Franz Fanon puts it:

It is not possible to enslave men without logically making them inferior through and through. And racism is only the emotional, affective, sometimes intellectual explanation of this inferiorization.

Oliver Cox points out that:

The Portuguese had no clear sense of racial antagonism, because its economic and rationalistic basis had not yet developed among them. Indeed the Portuguese and Spaniards never became fully freed of the crusading spirit, which constantly held in check their attainment of a clear appre-

ciation of the values of competitive labor exploitation... (and)... had developed no rationalizations of in-born human inferiority in support of a basic need for labor exploitation.

It is not until the discovery of America that Western civilization began to take on its characteristic attributes. As Cox noted:

...when Columbus turned the eyes and interests of the world away from the Mediterranean toward the Atlantic. The mysticism of the East soon lost its grip on human thought and the bourgeois world got under way. The socio-economic matrix of racial antagonism involved the commercialization of human labor in the West Indies, the East Indies, and in America, the intense competition among businessmen for the capitalist exploitation of the resources of this area, the development of nationalism and the consolidation of European nations, and the decline of the influence of the Roman Catholic church with its mystical inhibitions to the free exploitation of economic resources.

It should be observed that this view is not generally agreed upon. A popular belief among bourgeois historians is that "racism" has always existed throughout the recorded history of man; which is of course a lie. The bourgeois apologists

began their almost desperate search of the ancient archives for justifications of the "superiority" of Western (read capitalist) cultural accomplishments; and as an explanation of the inferiority of non-whites. The concept of innate racial antagonisms is nothing more than a crass falsification of history in order to "scientifically rationalize" the brutal exploitation and oppression of non-white peoples.

For example, let us take the development of slavery in the Americas. The slave trade was simply a way of recruiting labor for the purpose of exploiting the great natural resources of America. This trade did not develop because native Americans and Africans were red or black, but simply because they were the best workers to be found in plentiful supply for the heavy labor in the mines and plantations. If white workers were available in sufficient numbers they would have been substituted. As a matter of fact, part of the early demand for labor in the West Indies and on the mainland was filled by white indentured servants, who were primarily defined in the same terms as those used to characterize the Africans. It should not, however, be inferred from this that slavery was simply another form of capitalism. It was not. The slaveholders in America represented a class distinct

from the American bourgeoisie. However, the slave system was developed in the context of developing capitalism internationally and was protected and nurtured by European (particularly English) mercantile and later textile industrial interests.

This then, is the beginning of modern racial oppression. It was not based on an abstract, natural, immemorial feeling of mutual antipathy between groups, but rather a practical exploitative relationship. Although this peculiar kind of oppression was then in its incipiency, it had already achieved its significant characteristics. As it developed and took definite capitalist form, we could follow the capitalists around the world and see them repeat the process with nearly every "people of color."

But the fact of crucial significance is that racial oppression is merely an aspect of the problem of the proletarianization of labor, regardless of the color of the laborer. Thus, racial antagonism is essentially political-class conflict. The capitalist exploiter, being opportunistic and pragmatic, will utilize any convenience to keep his labor and other resources freely exploitable. In order to justify this the exploiters must argue that the workers are innately degraded and degenerate, consequently they merit their condition.

This is the real rea-

son for the unnumbered sermons preached and "scientific" books written to prove the incapacity for cultural conversion of exploitable peoples, written always with the implied or expressed presumption that this incapacity should stand as a bar to movements and/or the cultural assimilation of such peoples. Assimilation diminishes the exploitable possibilities. In short:

the exploitation of native peoples, imperialism, is not a sin, not essentially a problem of morals or of vice; it is a problem of production and of competition for markets... They are labor-capital-profits relationships: therefore, race relations are proletarian-bourgeois relations and hence political-class relations. (Cox)

Although both racial oppression and the struggle of the white proletariat with the bourgeoisie are parts of a single phenomenon, racial oppression involves a significant variation. In the case of racial oppression the tendency of the bourgeoisie is to ideologically and to a certain extent actually proletarianize a whole people--that is to say, the whole people is looked upon as a class. It is this need to depersonalize a whole people that introduces into the class struggle the complicating factors known as "race problems." In other words, situations of race relations may be distinguished according to the exploita-

tive convenience of the white bourgeoisie. However, this does not mean that all Blacks in the U.S. are proletarian. They are not. To a certain extent (less so than among the dominant white race) class differentiation exists among Blacks. However, the ideological tendency (encouraged by the capitalist class) to view Blacks as a single homogeneous bloc tends to subordinate Black workers to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements in the Black population and to further estrange them from their fellow workers of the white race. The tendency among Black workers to succumb to nationalism and race before class ideologies does much to reinforce the racist tendencies of white workers (which are likewise fostered by the capitalists). In the same manner, racist tendencies among white workers tend to feed the idea that all Blacks regardless of class must stick together against "whitey."

Only through proletarian unity around the common class struggle of Black and white workers against the capitalist class will the first steps toward overcoming racial prejudices be taken. And only through the victory of the united proletariat and the destruction of the capitalist system will the material basis for racial oppression and prejudice be removed.

Marxism

and

South

America

by Ron Albertson

Part One

General

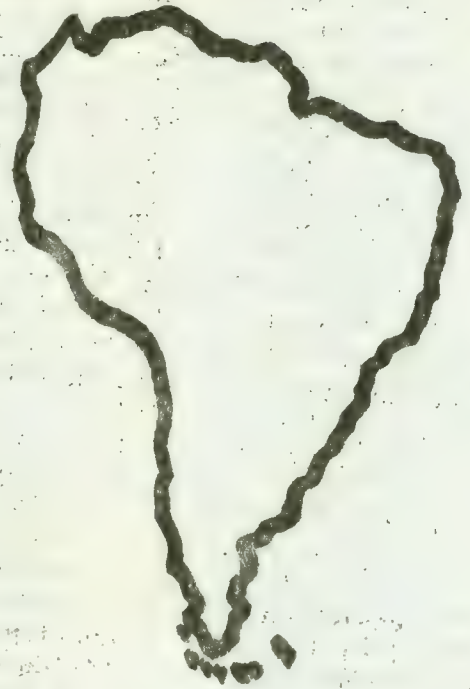
Development

With this issue we begin the serialisation of Marxism and South America. This pamphlet will outline the tasks and perspectives for revolutionaries in South America.

Latin America was colonized by expeditions sent out by the increasingly mercantile expansionist merchants who wished to tap natural resources including precious metals. In Mexico and Peru were a high concentration of silver, and large populations of Indians. A good return was received on investments. Capital accumulation under European mercantilism had not reached the stage (which it did later after developing into industrial capitalist society) where any type of capital export could be used. Instead the use of African slaves and a large subjugation of the native Indian population had to be used in order to create the initial capital.

In the Carribean and in Brazil a native civilization capable of producing initial capital was not found. This forced the European merchants to base their colonies on the labor of African slaves.

In all, from the very beginning of South America's relationship with Europe the economy was set up on an export basis. Since capital produced



under the mercantile system went exclusively to foreign countries South America was left without any capital to develop its own internal economy. The landed aristocracy had no use for internal production of commodities because it would import all of its consumer goods.

With the development of mercantilist society into industrial capitalist capitalist society the monopolist structure of the economy remained. The comprador sector of the bourgeoisie (the sector which dealt in exporting-importing) were opposed to any internal development of the production of consumer products. The comprador bourgeoisie instead profited by the continuation of the monopoly of goods by foreign bourgeoisies. Any competition with foreign capital would have taken away business from them first by cutting the number of imports and also cutting down the amount of exported raw material (which would have been diverted to national industries), thus cutting the profits of the comprador sector of the bourgeoisie.

The development of any national bourgeoisie was hindered greatly by two factors: 1) in the early development of South America by Europe there was no large colonization of Europeans (small merchants, artisans, etc.) as in the United States or Canada. Thus the colonies of Latin America were no more than warehouses of raw material

rather than expanding societies themselves; 2) Because of the tight monopoly structure of South America from the earliest stage of bourgeois development, the comprador sector held a great social and thus political power in these countries. Thus for example peasants were stopped from developing into real petty bourgeoisie because huge taxation of agricultural products was instituted from the beginning, causing independent peasants to go into debt and become for all intents and purposes slaves or serfs of the large landlords. The landed aristocracy (large landowners) held common interest with the comprador sector because it also wished to keep its monopoly over agriculture and also in most cases had their produce exported anyway.

After the political independence of South America was achieved a series of struggles between the national bourgeoisie and the comprador sector took place which lasted about a quarter of a century, until foreign capital achieved enough accumulation for investment. For the period between 1820-1840 the national sector of the bourgeoisie was able to force the governments to enforce protective tariffs.

The comprador bourgeoisie were in direct conflict with such protective tariffs. When the comprador bourgeoisie were not able to defeat such actions themselves they were able to get financial and military aid from their foreign trade partners. Such an example was the "triple Alliance" war against Paraguay in which six-sevenths of Paraguay's male population was lost defending the nationally financed railroad system and other structural developments. The British, by participating in the internal struggles of the South American bourgeoisies on the side of the comprador sector, thus paved the way for trade relations and economic dominance over South America.

England had played a major part in the preparation of Latin America for free trade. Understanding that the greater the gap between the development of her economy and that of Latin America would give rise to a greater

position in the trade balance for herself.

The continual role of foreign capital in the life of Latin America has assured that Latin America would remain structurally underdeveloped. To understand this phenomenon we can look to Marx who explains the relations between developed and underdeveloped countries:

Capitals invested in foreign trade are in a position to yield a higher rate of profit, because, in the first place, they come in competition with commodities produced in other countries with lesser facilities of production, so that an advanced country is enabled to sell its goods above their value even when it sells them cheaper than the competing countries. To the extent that the labour of the advanced countries is here exploited as a labour of a higher specific weight, the rate of profit rises, because labour which has not been paid as being of a higher quality is sold as such. The same condition may obtain in the relations with a certain country, into which commodities are exported or from which commodities are imported. This country may offer more materialized labour in goods than it receives, and yet it may receive in return commodities cheaper than it could produce them. In the same way a manufacturer, who exploits a new invention before it has become general, undersells his competitors and yet sells his commodities above their individual values, that is to say, he exploits the specifically higher productive power of the labour employed by him as surplus value. By this means he secures a surplus profit, on the other hand, capital invested in colonies etc. may yield a higher rate of profit for the simple reason that rate of profit is higher there on account of the backward development, and for the added reason that slaves, coolies, etc. permit a better exploitation of labour. We see no reason why these higher rates of profit realized by capitals invested in certain lines and sent home by them should not enter as elements into the average rate of profit and tend to keep it to that extent. (1)

At first free trade in Latin America attracted both domestic and public capital to develop the industries which produced raw materials which came into a great demand on the world market. It was not until the industries had already been built and producing profit, that foreign capital started buying up the economy. Because of the higher rate of profit, capital was attracted to Latin America, quickly subordinating the economy to foreign domination on the world market.

By this time the national bourgeoisie were too weak to play any part in Latin American development. The incorporation of Latin America into the world economy furthered more than ever the structural underdevelopment. Bukharin, while discussing this type of international division of labor, quotes Marx:

The foundation of all highly developed divisions of labour that are brought about by the exchange of commodities is the cleavage between town and country. We may say that the whole economic history of society is summarized in the development of this cleavage... (2)

Bukharin goes on to say:

The cleavage between "town and country" as well as the "development of the cleavage", formerly confined to one country only are now being reproduced on a tremendously large basis. Viewed from this standpoint, entire countries appear today as "towns," namely the industrial countries, whereas entire agrarian territories appear to be "country." (3)

Andre Frank in his study of *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* sums up the historical development of this structural decay by stating:

Implanted in the colonial epoch and deepened in the free trade era, the structure of underdevelopment was consolidated in Latin America by nineteenth-century imperialist trade and finance. (4)

Today in Latin America because of the long history of exploitation by foreign capital, nationalist tendencies are prevalent and partially for this reason a revolutionary party capable of leading the working class has not emerged. For the most part nationalists

substitute a revolution against foreign domination (national bourgeois revolution) for a revolution by the working class against capitalism (the basic contradiction in South America as well as the rest of the world). These nationalists are often considered to be revolutionaries and even communists. Cuba is the prime example of such a substitution. Today in Latin America, nationalists to Cuba for inspiration as the country which broke away from the hated Americans. A revolutionary party must be built which can lead the workers and show the difference between a nationalist war and a class war.

Castro who was a petty bourgeois nationalist never had any base in the working class. His program for agrarian reform and the restructuring of the economy so more capital could be used for the development of a national bourgeoisie was totally bourgeois in character. In fact, in the period following Castro's rise to power, he had called for loans from the United States. The United States had different intentions though (as we found out with the Bay of Pigs invasion) and refused to help the new regime. Because of Castro's intention of making Cuba a more competitive state in the world market he naturally had to fight to lower the rate of profit, thus he found little willingness for the imperialists to invest.

In desperation Castro used the propaganda war going on between the U.S. and Russian imperialists. Castro called his new regime a "communist" state and thus created a great pressure on Russia to come to the aid of one of its family. After negotiations Castro received the necessary loans in exchange for a military base in Cuba.

Che Guevara stated at one time in a press conference:

Every social revolution has to have its Stalinist phase. Let's hope ours lasts only a short time. We had to nationalize United States industry, and when we did, the United States cut us off. I'm sure if we were really Commies, we'd get along fine, just like Russia and the United States get along with tourism, plenty of trade, exchange of students and the rest. (5) In short, the working class took no part in the Cuban revolution and does not

control the state today. To say as the Trotskyists do that it is a "deformed" workers' state because it has nationalized property is to deny the basic tendency of monopoly capitalism summarized by Bukharin:

Thus various spheres of the concentration and organization process stimulate each other, creating a very strong tendency towards transforming the entire national economy into one gigantic combined enterprise under the tutelage of the financial kings and the capitalist state, an enterprise which monopolizes the national market and forms the prerequisite for organized production on a higher non-capitalist level. (6)

In other words, capitalism organizes the means of production in the prerequisite form but still does not negate the basic contradiction of capitalism, the divorce of the producer from control over his product and its distribution. Any other view such as that which maintains that the petty bourgeoisie can create a workers' state (even "deformed") is clear revisionism.

One of the main reasons why nationalism is so popular is the infamous role the United States has played in subjugating Latin America for its own use. A good example was the robbery from Mexico of its richest territory. Immediately after the creation of Mexico as an independent state, American slave owners swarmed over the border. Since slavery was illegal in Mexico, the new Mexican government objected. The slave owners then proclaimed the independent state of Texas. With the war that ensued Mexico lost almost half of its territory and its richest.

Another good example was the creation of the state of Panama. Under Theodore Roosevelt's administration the United States fomented an uprising in the province of Panama against Colombia. As soon as Panama declared itself independent the U.S. rushed in with military aid. Panama then became a protectorate of the United States.

There are many more examples of U.S. intervention into the internal political life of Latin America which we will deal with later.

Foreign domination plays a large part in the underdevelopment and problems of Latin America today, but one must remember that capitalism in general is the basis for the problems in Latin America, not just one specific aspect. A nationalist (i.e. bourgeois) revolution does not relieve the contradictions of society nor does it ever completely remove the country from the dominance of the world market. All countries are dependent on other countries for certain goods. Only a socialist revolution carried out by the working class throughout the world can solve the contradictions of society.

On the question of agrarian reform, a new and revolutionary stand must be taken. For revolutionaries to call for the division of large farms into small farms which would be run on a petty bourgeois basis is to deny the contradictions in capitalist agricultural development. That is, the process of monopolization and centralization would occur all over again.

We must first of all establish exactly what the objectives of agrarian reform are. First, to give the poor peasant, who is forced by the large landowners to produce a mere subsistence standard of living for himself, a more decent life. Secondly, under capitalism vast tracts of land are left unused while poor peasants and workers are almost starving. Marx explains this phenomena:

The mere legal property in land does not create any ground rent for the landlord. But it gives him the power to withdraw his land from exploitation until the economic conditions permit him to utilize it in such a way that it will yield him a surplus whenever the land is used either for agriculture proper or for other productive purposes, such as buildings, etc. He cannot increase or decrease the absolute quantity of its field of employment, but he can do so with its marketable quantity. For this reason, as Fourier as already remarked, a characteristic fact in all civilized countries is that a comparatively considerable portion of the land always remains uncultivated. (7)

Thus we can see that capitalism itself must be abolished as a prerequisite for any solving of the agrarian problem in

continued on page 36

Trade Unions Today

1973 Contracts are

Bureaucratic Sellouts

by Ron Albertson

Trade Unions Today is a regular feature of Workers' Truth. Future issues will contain articles dealing with the problems facing various individual trade unions as well as issues relating to all trade unions. This month's article outlines the general tendencies which have been brought out during the 1973 round of contract negotiations.

This year's contracts can be summed up as nothing more than a complete loss for the American working class. While workers see no end to the skyrocketing inflation, they can see that their wages can hardly suffice at the present.

The necessity of counteracting the tendency for the rate of profit to fall and the present economic crisis have brought about the greatest attack on the American workers' rights since pre-union days. In all branches of industry workers are forced to work overtime, thereby nullifying the eight hour day. The strike, the main weapon of the unions has been whittled away by the bureaucrats first by selective strikes against individual plants or companies (instead of an entire industry) then to no strikes at all. Demands now are to be arbitrated, say the bureaucrats. If Meany, Abel, Woodcock and the rest of these scum are not stopped and ousted from the unions, there will soon not even be

any demands.

The bureaucrats, who wish to become more than just partners with management, but rather part of the management (and this is true of all bureaucrats), have so far shown that they are eagerly trying to demonstrate to the bourgeoisie that they are capable of this new role. The attacks by bureaucrats against rank-and-file militants has proven their eagerness for this role.

In one of the latest developments, United Steelworkers President I.W. Abel has had a two page advertisement, sponsored by U.S. Steel, published in some seven publications. This labor "leader" appeals to the steelworkers to stop lagging in production and speed up their work for the good of "America." Abel states, "If we adopt a don't give a damn attitude we risk becoming a second-class economic power." This statement exemplifies the bureaucrats' contempt for American workers and workers internationally by trying to indoctrinate them with bourgeois chauvinism. The bureaucrats want the Am-

erican workers to be lenient on their American employers and not to take too much of their assets away in wages. In fact, the bureaucrats want workers to accept slashes in real wages so they can see America remain "a first-class economic power." However, America is not owned by the American people, that is workers and capitalists together. It is the sole property of the capitalist class. The only thing workers will gain by subordinating their own interests to the trade war struggles of U.S. imperialism is that they'll get to see their bosses drive bigger cars.

One of the major struggles going on in the building trades is the struggle against open-shop contractors. Frank Banadio, president of the Building and Construction Trades Union of the AFL-CIO, pretended to be surprised and worried that non-union contractors were paying more to their employees. Banadio called for "a fight against an all-out concerted effort by anti-union groups to destroy the trade union movement." Workers must

realize that the largest "union busters" themselves are bureaucrats such as Banadio who have kept union workers' wages down so low that non-union workers get paid more. It is this type of activity which will blow apart the unions. What worker would want to become a dues-paying union member to a union which kept him from earning higher wages.

But Banadio, alas, has a solution to fight these "anti-union groups." In order to be in a better bargaining position for contracts he will give up work rules set up by the workers for their own safety which might hinder production.

The American workers must regain the control of their unions before it is too late. As the bureaucrats move closer to liquidating the unions, the state of existence of the workers is beginning more and more to resemble pre-union days.

It is clear that not only should the unions be revitalized but that

a revolutionary program must be adopted by them. The combination of the recent Middle East war, rabid inflation and the spread of national chauvinistic filth by the bureaucrats creates quite a bowl full to be flushed down upon the working class. Workers must be educated as to the true nature of the problems they face today. It is the job of revolutionaries to carry out this education and substitute a socialist consciousness for the bourgeois consciousness now prevalent in the working class. This can only be brought about by the intervention of the vanguard party into the workers' daily struggles with a revolutionary program. By pointing out the shortcomings of these struggles and the necessity of going beyond them and by drawing the direct connections to bourgeois society, the revolutionary vanguard will participate in the process of raising the class consciousness of the workers to the level necessary for the final struggle

against capital, the socialist revolution.

Slogans or programs which do not raise the question of intransigent class struggle, socialist revolution and the creation of a workers' state can easily be misconstrued as reformist (that is, they can be carried out within the framework of bourgeois society) and can thus be co-opted by the bureaucrats. The task of revolutionaries is to constantly point out the necessity of the socialist revolution if the interests of the working class are to be defended adequately. This is the task which the Revolutionary Workers Group and *Workers' Truth* have taken upon ourselves to carry out.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION TO THE BUREAUCRATS!

FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PARTY OF REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS!

JOIN THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS GROUP!

Revolutionary Workers Group Program for the Trade Unions

- * INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS FROM THE STATE!
- * DEMOCRATIC RANK-AND-FILE CONTROL OF THE TRADE UNIONS!
- * NO SUPPORT TO CAPITALIST GOVERNMENTS!
- * INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY!
- * A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES AND HOURS-- JOBS FOR ALL!
- * ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED AND THE UNEMPLOYED!
- * ARMED WORKERS' DEFENSE GUARDS!
- * END THE SPECIAL OPPRESSION OF WOMEN!
- * END THE SPECIAL OPPRESSION OF BLACKS, LATINOS AND OTHER MINORITIES!
- * END COMPANY-CONTROLLED SENIORITY SYSTEMS--FULL RIGHTS FOR YOUNG WORKERS!
- * NATIONALIZATION OF ALL INDUSTRY, TRANSPORTATION, ETC. UNDER THE COLLECTIVE CONTROL OF THE ENTIRE WORKING CLASS!
- * BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PARTY OF REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS (FOURTH INTERNATIONAL)!
- * A WORKERS' REPUBLIC!

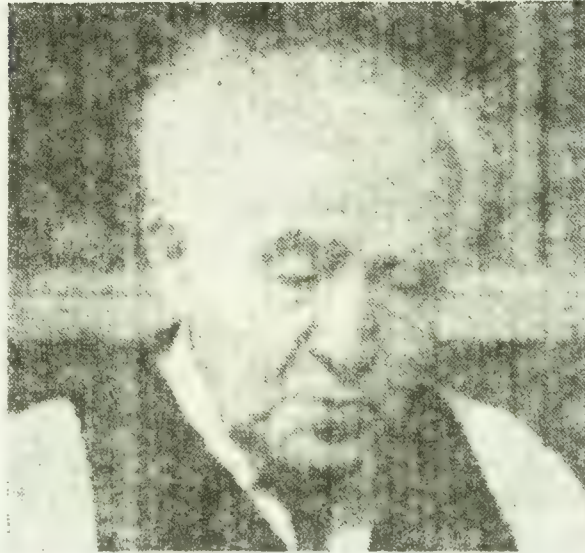
Revolutionary Perspectives

in the Middle East

by David Ross

Part
Four

Immediate right, David Ben-Gurion, first Israeli premier. Far right, Moshe Dayan and Golda Meir.



With this issue we continue the serialization of the pamphlet Revolutionary Perspectives in the Middle East begun in our August issue. This pamphlet

deals with the background to the current "Israeli-Arab Crisis" and puts forward a revolutionary program as its solution.

Israel: 1948-1972

The 1948 war gave Israel about half as much more land than had originally been designated for the Jewish state by the United Nations. Also, even though Israel had all of this new land, the number of Palestinians living within its boundaries dropped from about 859,000 to about 133,000. The rest being forced to live in the Jordanian, Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian refugee camps. Eighty per cent of the remaining Palestinians were forced to live under Israeli military administration.

For the next four years the Jewish population of Israel doubled while the return of Palestinians was somewhat less than a trickle. On July 5, 1950 the Israeli government passed its famous law on nationality and immigration, the Law of Return. This utterly reactionary and racist law was passed unanimously by the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament). Even such "left-wing" and "labor" forces as Mapam and Mapai voted for the law. The law stat-

ed that every Jew had the right to immigrate to Israel and that any Jew who did immigrate to Israel had the right to become a citizen. The only exceptions were those who were deemed undesirable by the Minister of Immigration. Undesirables included those who "act against the Jewish nation; or may threaten the public health or threaten the State security." In the meantime laws were passed to effectively bar Palestinian return to Israel. Any Palestinian who wished to return had to apply for naturalization and swear an oath of loyalty to the Israeli state. The official Israeli government viewpoint on the Palestinians was summed up nicely in a quote from David Ben-Gurion, first Prime Minister of Israel, in July, 1948: "We must do everything in our power to insure that they never return."

During the period of rapidly increasing immigration, Israel was faced with extreme economic growing pains. This was due to the high cost of settling the new immigrants and integrating them into the economy. The new immigrants,

who were primarily from North Africa and Asia, were on the whole unskilled laborers. The Israeli economy suffered a severe crisis during this period and drastic measures were introduced by the Mapai government. In February, 1952 the government introduced a New Economic Policy quite similar to the one instituted by Nixon on August 15, 1971. Wages were frozen. The Israeli pound was devalued. Compulsory loans were levied on the Israeli populace. These "cures" for inflation created more unemployment, a problem which already existed for many of the immigrants. Yet, by 1954, the foreign payments deficit had been cut and prices had been stabilized to a certain extent. However, the economic problems of Israel were far from being solved. In fact they were just beginning.

In 1955 Israel began a massive arms buildup. This arms buildup left them much better prepared for the 1956 Suez War with Egypt. In 1955 only one year prior to the war the strength of the Egyptian armed forces amounted to six serviceable airplanes and enough tank ammunition to last through about one hour of battle. By the time of the seizure of the Suez Canal by Egypt their military strength had been built up to some degree, but nothing to match the tripartite alliance of Britain, France and Israel. The war was "short and sweet" and the Egyptians were forced to give up the canal. As with the 1948 war, revolutionary Marxists give no support to either side in this capitalist war. The Egyptian workers and peasants had nothing to gain from control of the Suez by their rulers. Likewise Egypt's loss of the canal did not mean any gains for workers and peasants elsewhere.

Israel greatly expanded its territory when it easily defeated a united front of several Arab countries in the Six-Day War of 1967. Israel's spoils in that war were the West Bank (taken from Jordan), the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula (taken from Egypt) and the Golan Heights (taken from Syria). The only area that the Israeli rulers did not conquer which they want is the

south bank of the Litani River in Lebanon. This would give Israel a natural border with Lebanon instead of a dotted line on the map.

Israel has been making moves to annex part if not all of the territories occupied in the 1967 war. For quite some time now residents of the West Bank have had freedom of movement across official Israeli borders, and in 1971 municipal elections were held under Israeli administration. Palestinians in the Gaza Strip will soon, according to Israeli government sources have the same rights of movement. Also, the Gaza Strip has been increasingly integrated into the economy of Israel. Both of these areas were originally destined for the Palestinian state under the United Nations Partition Resolution of 1947. The West Bank was seized by Jordan after the 1948 war, while Egypt took the Gaza Strip. Some oil drilling has been done in the Sinai and some settlements are being developed for the use of Gaza Palestinians, in order to diffuse the high concentration in the Strip. In February of 1972, the Israeli Defense Force seized 5,000 acres of Bedouin land, ostensibly for security purposes. However, according to the left-bourgeois Mapam party, the real reason for the land seizure was to build a settlement for Hebrew colonists. This, of course, would do much to "integrate" the Gaza Strip into Israel. Likewise in the Golan Heights, agricultural settlements have been established by the Israeli government. Many pseudo-Marxists call on the Israeli state to turn these lands back over to the Arab capitalists. However, it must be made clear that the Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian capitalists have no more right to these lands than the Hebrew capitalists. These lands, along with the rest of the Middle East, must be seized by the working class and peasantry of Israel and the Arab countries.

We stated in the Preface to this pamphlet that "most forces on the left today are more interested in the national question as it applies to the Middle East than they are in examining the internal economic functioning of Israel, and the consequent development

of the class struggle." This attitude and the failure of seeing Israel only as a "political entity" has blinded them to the fact of imperialist exploitation in Israel. Instead of being a nation-state exploited by imperialism, just as Egypt is a nation-state exploited by imperialism, some leftists see Israel itself as an imperialist nation in the Middle East. Some do not see the Hebrew workers as being exploited by imperialism, but as beneficiaries of imperialist exploitation of Arab and other "third world" peoples. These views are totally incorrect from a Marxist standpoint. While the imperialist exploitation of Israel and the Hebrew workers may take forms which are not precisely the same as the forms of imperialist exploitation of Egypt and Egyptian workers, the content is fundamentally identical in both cases. Both Israel and Egypt are used by various imperialist enterprises to reap profits at the expense of the exploitation of the Hebrew and Egyptian workers, and in the case of Israel at the expense of the superexploitation of the Palestinians living within Israel.

Israel, unlike the other states in the Middle East, does not specialize in petroleum production. However, it should not be inferred from this fact that Israel does not have a basically "one-commodity economy." If it is correct to call the various Central American countries "banana republics" then it is equally correct to call Israel a "diamond republic." Further on we will deal with the Israeli diamond industry in more detail. Suffice it to say for now that Israel like the other countries of the Middle East does have a single product specialization: industrial diamonds. Israel also has its most abundant natural resource tapped in the interest of world imperialism. In the other countries of the Middle East this major resource is crude oil. In Israel, however, it is skilled labor. In order to produce industrial diamonds the unfinished raw diamonds must undergo treatment at the hands of skilled labor. It is this skilled labor which is Israel's pri-

mary "natural" resource. It is often pointed out that Israel has a high rate of consumption, especially as compared to the other countries in the Middle East. However, this does not make Israel an imperialist state. It merely shows up the fact that aside from its production of industrial diamonds and its use as a source of skilled labor for the imperialists, it also provides a wide market for Western goods. We pointed out in the Preface that Israel's foreign currency debt is about the same as Egypt's. This chronic foreign currency debt keeps the Israeli economy tied to the imperialists, just as for the rest of the economies in the Middle East.

There are four major sectors of the Israeli economy: Diamonds, textiles and clothing, chemicals, and agriculture and food production. Diamonds are of course, the crucial sector of Israel's economy. In 1967, more than one third of Israel's exports were industrial diamonds. The percentage of Israel's exports accounted for by diamonds is generally about this much. Israel is the world's second largest exporter of industrial diamonds and accounts for about thirty per cent of the world's production. Israel gets most of its rough diamonds from South Africa. Thus, the various Arab nationalist ideologues and the adulators notwithstanding, Israel's ties to South Africa are more a result of economic interdependence than of evil ideologies and the unity of "settlers" from Europe against "third world" people. The Histadrut (which even though it is ostensibly a trade union is still the largest single employer in Israel) is almost completely absent from the diamond industry.

Textiles and clothing rank third in exports behind diamonds and agricultural products. The textile industry has been among the hardest hit by lay-offs and speed-up. For instance, during the period from 1965-1967, there was a 5.4 per cent decrease in the number of workers employed in both industries, however, production per worker in the textile industry rose by almost 23 per cent. Here the Histadrut accounts for about 2.5 per cent of the capital involved.

The chemical industry ranks fourth in exports. Here the natural resources of Israel other than skilled labor are exploited. Specifically, various mineral deposits in the Negev Desert and the area surrounding the Dead Sea are used in the production of various chemicals. In the chemical industry as opposed to diamonds and textiles-clothing, the Histadrut controls twenty per cent of the enterprises. Even under "trade union" control, the chemical workers are not exempt from lay-offs and speed-up. The number of chemical workers dropped six per cent during the 1965-1967 period while production rose ten per cent and exports rose forty per cent!

Israel's second place export is food, and agriculture and food production play a significant role in the Israeli economy. However, agriculture does not take up the significant portion of the labor force that one would think it did judging from all of the talk about Jewish agricultural settlements, the land and the much heralded kibbutzim. We will deal with the kibbutzim in more detail further on. However, now we will deal with Israeli agriculture as a whole. First of all, only twelve per cent of the labor force in Israel is involved in agriculture. Israel is by no means an "agricultural country." That is, in the sense that the bulk of the population is peasantry and/or rural proletariat. It is in the agricultural sector of the economy that the Histadrut has the most control. However, other capitalist concerns are beginning to erode the Histadrut predominance. In the past few years there has been a steady transfer of laborers from Histadrut agricultural enterprises to industrial concerns. Food prices have continually risen as middlemen intercede due to the inability of the Histadrut to market food produce in sufficient quantities through its marketing "cooperatives." Another example of Israel's specialization can be seen in agriculture where citrus fruits account for approximately twenty per cent of Israeli agricultural production and eighty per cent of Israel's agricultural exports.

Now we come to the kibbutzim, Israel's "socialist" agricultural sector. The first thing to note about the kibbutzim is that the population of the kibbutzim is only about three or four per cent of the total population in Israel. Thus, they do not account for a substantial portion of the Israeli population, nor do they account for a substantial portion of Israeli agricultural production. The second thing worth noting is the relationship of the kibbutzim to Israel's banks. Without financial aid from the Israeli banks, which are by no means socialist, the kibbutzim would fold up in no time. In order to buy the tools, machinery, tractors, fertilizer, etc. necessary for agricultural production the kibbutzim must turn to the Israeli banks for loans, which of course, are not given interest free. In fact, French scholar Maxime Rodinson quotes an Israeli banker as saying the following about the kibbutzim:

To the outside world the *kibbutz* behaves exactly like a capitalist enterprise, and keeps its contracts better than an individual. If the *kibbutz* is internally composed of people who renounce private property, who bring up their children collectively or who...crawl about on all fours, that is none of our concern. (1)

The reference to the kibbutz's behavior as being "exactly like a capitalist enterprise" is further illustrated by the fact that recently the kibbutzim have turned to industrial production. They are mainly involved in plastics, crockery, furniture and other light industries. The members of the kibbutz do not, however, function as laborers in the kibbutz factories, instead they act as supervisors over the laborers who are brought in from the neighboring villages. A large proportion of these laborers are Palestinian. Thus, the kibbutzim become industrial enterprises. In fact, industrial enterprises account for thirty to forty per cent of the production of the kibbutzim. Along with the turn toward industrial production by the kibbutzim has been the growing penetration of outside capital into the kibbutzim.

Petroleum is the major commodity produced in the Middle East. It is the

major export of every country in the Middle East other than Israel. In fact, the Middle East is the primary source of crude oil and other petroleum products for Western Europe. Although Western Europe is the prime user of oil from the Middle East, the United States is the prime beneficiary of the profits from Middle East petroleum. Even though Russian capital has been penetrating more and more into Egypt, since 1956 American oil operations have intensified there. Israel is the only country in the Middle East whose major export is not petroleum. However, this does not mean that Israel has nothing to do with world petroleum production. The Eilat to Haifa pipeline places Israel in a key position as an exporter of oil from Iran to the United States and Western Europe. The Sykes-Picot Treaty, in fact, provided that Lebanon and Palestine would be separated from Syria and Europeanized. These Europeanized sections of the Middle East would then be used as coastal outlets for crude oil from the Middle East to the imperialist countries. Another factor which places Israel more in the petroleum arena is the Sinai peninsula, where oil has been found. If the Sinai is annexed by Israel, which is a possibility, then the oil from the Sinai could provide Israel with a large petroleum export.

There are, of course, other industries in Israel. These are, however, new industries which are just getting started in Israel, but which are growing at a rapid rate. Probably the most rapidly growing of all the new industries in Israel is the metals industry. The metals industry, like the textile industry and the chemical industry has grown at the cost of lay-offs and speed-up for the working class. For instance, during the period from 1965-1967 the amount of workers involved in the metals industry decreased by twelve per cent, while exports increased by seventy per cent. Tourism has been another growing industry in Israel. In 1954 the revenue from tourism amounted to only 4.8 million dollars. In 1964 this revenue had soared to 54.2 million dollars.

Tourism is an industry where foreign capital strongly predominates. The major corporations being PEC Israel, an American based corporation and Hilton Hotels. A third corporation which is benefitting from the Israeli tourism "boom" is the Hotel Corporation of Israel, which despite its name is a Chicago based firm of real estate developers (Chicago industrialists own 40% of the stock). Reports from the board of directors of this company point out that if the Israeli assets of the company were liquidated, they would provide returns of over one hundred per cent profits to the shareholders.

Another industry which is of importance in Israel is the construction industry. The chief importance of construction to the economy is, of course, its role in providing the facilities for other industries. Another role of construction is in building housing and hotels for the various American real estate developers who are investing in Israel. In 1959 forty per cent of the construction industry was controlled by the Histadrut and the Mapai dominated government. However, in recent years this "workers control" (which is anything but workers control) has been increasingly eroded as foreign investments come to play a more and more dominant role in this sector of the economy. The major foreign corporation profiting from the Israeli construction industry is the PEC Israel Corporation. It is in the construction industry where we find the bulk of the Palestinian industrial proletariat. Since 1954 the percentage of Palestinian construction workers in relation to the entire Palestinian work force has increased tremendously. In 1954, 8.4 per cent of Palestinian workers were involved in construction, sixty per cent in agriculture and 8.2 per cent in manufacturing. In 1966 these figures had changed drastically to the point where Palestinian construction workers accounted for 19.6 per cent of the Palestinian labor force, agriculture for forty per cent and manufacturing for 14.9 per cent. Construction is the most unstable sector of the Israeli economy, while manufacturing, in which Palestinians play a lesser role is expanding in re-

lation to the other sectors of the economy. Along with being forced into this unstable sector of the economy, Palestinian workers are paid far lower wages than the Hebrew workers, and are relegated to the more menial tasks, or as Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir puts it, "We are turning the Arabs into hewers of wood and drawers of water." This superexploitation of the Palestinian workers in the construction industry has increased markedly with the occupation of the territories won in the 1967 war. For instance of the total of 16,000 workers employed by Solel Boneh, a Histadrut owned construction company, 3,000 are Palestinians and other Arabs from the occupied territories. It is this role of the Palestinian sector of the proletariat as a superexploited layer, as well as their suffering a special national oppression which will provide for the Palestinian involvement in the revolution in Israel. These twin factors: national oppression and super-exploitation, will make the Palestinian workers the vanguard elements of the working class in the struggle for a socialist Israel.

To a great extent class consciousness in Israel is at a low level. The primary identification is of a "community" type. That is one is a Palestinian, a Sephard or an Ashkenaz. However, as the crisis of capitalism continues to deepen in Israel, class conflict grows and along with it class consciousness. Recent class struggles in Israel have for instance taken a "communal" form while the content has had a class character. We refer of course to the developing struggles among the Sephardic sector of the Hebrew proletariat. This is very important and we refer to these "communal" forms as having a class content because of the predominance of Sephardim in the industrial proletariat. While the Palestinian workers will no doubt form the bulk of the vanguard of the working class due to their position as the most oppressed and superexploited layer of the working class, the Sephardim will be the key sector to be won over to revolutionary politics if the revolution is to be successful.

The most recent development in the struggle of the Sephardim is the emergence of the Black Panther Party. The BPP is a group of Sephardic youth who organized early in 1971. They have consistently brought out thousands to demonstrations called in protest of Sephardic living conditions in Israel. In calling the first of these demonstrations the BPP worked in conjunction with the Israeli Socialist Organization, the leading anti-Zionist group in Israel. Unfortunately, the Black Panthers have failed to fully develop an anti-Zionist position and have only recently taken steps in that direction. This, however, is not the failure of the Panthers themselves so much as it is the failure of the anti-Zionist left in Israel, who should be playing a vanguard role and consciously trying to turn the membership of the BPP in the right direction. This includes both the ISO (*Matzpen*) and the ISO (*Matzpen-Marxist*) who write off the Sephardim as a reactionary element similar to the Algerian *pied noirs*. However, while some Sephardim have been taken in by the demagogy of right wing forces this is because of the failure of any revolutionary alternative to materialize. One demonstration called by the Panthers was in January of 1972. It was held outside the convening of the twentieth World Zionist Congress. One of the major protests was of the fact that in 1971 13,000 Soviet Jews immigrated into Israel. The BPP was not protesting the immigration, but rather the fact that the immigrants' housing was taken care of at the expense of the Sephardim who were thrown into the streets to make room for the "refugees." The type of Russian immigrant coming to Israel is not generally the poverty-stricken peasant or garment worker of the early twentieth century but scientists, technicians and other "new middle class" elements. In order to make room for these elements the ruling class in Israel who wishes to use these "refugees" to widen the buffer between classes in Israel, forces the working class Sephardim into the streets. Not only do the Hebrew workers pay for the crisis of capitalism with lower wages, speedup and unemployment, but now with the loss of their homes. No doubt the Sephardim

will soon come to realize that they have less to fear from the fantastic possibility of Palestinians driving them into the sea than the reality of unemployment, speedup and the loss of their homes to the new middle class.

While a large proportion of working class struggle has taken this "communal" form in Israel, all has not been peaceful on the economic front. The number of strikes and strike days "lost" (lost in the sense that the capitalists were unable to exploit the strikers on those days) has increased continually since the founding of Israel.

Prior to the 1967 war Israel was going through a recession. The 1967 war managed to bring Israel out of the recession but it laid the groundwork for further problems for the Hebrew capitalists. The result of the 1967 war and the end of the recession was a post-war expansion of the Israeli economy at the great expense of the Israeli workers (both Hebrew and Palestinian). This expansion was not without its own social contradictions which exacerbated the class struggle within Israel. By mid-1968 unemployment stood at 5.71 per cent and wages were still frozen at their pre-war recession levels. While wages increased by only 1.7 per cent during the first six months of 1968, production was almost thirty per cent greater than productivity for the same period in 1967. At the same time prices rose 2.3 per cent (this also includes, however, the third quarter of 1968). 1968 saw an increase in the number of strikes as opposed to 1967. Although the unemployment and speedup were in the interest of "national security," this did not deter the growing number of wildcat strikes.

The New York Times reported in 1970: "All it takes is a lull in the fighting on the frontiers for the fighting to start in the cities between labor and management," an Israeli labor leader said wryly.

After three months of cease-fire, and with news of fighting almost nonexistent, Israel is in the middle of a wave of strikes with wages, prices, and taxes threatening to

explode into inflation.

Secondary schools throughout the country are closed, the teachers striking for more pay. El Al, which had survived the hijackings, flew only a fragment of its schedule because of a strike of maintenance workers.

There were no weather reports yesterday--the meteorological workers had walked out. Power cuts are commonplace for hours on end as the electric workers turn their strike action on and off. Port workers of Haifa and Ashdod, telephone operators, even civil service unions, at several Government ministries, have declared strikes for hours, days, and weeks... (2)

Such activities did not stop in 1970 either. The end of the summer of 1971 saw a wave of strikes in Israel, including dockworkers, airport workers and even in some cases civilian workers at the military posts in the occupied West Bank. It was also a strike wave toward the end of 1972 which led to the show trials of members of two Maoist groups, the Revolutionary Communist League and the Red Front. The purpose of these trials was to dampen the strike fever and "unite the nation" against "traitors."

As we can see, Israel is not exempt from the crisis currently confronting the world capitalist system. Far from joining together under the banner of Zionism, the Hebrew workers are moving into struggle against their capitalist rulers, albeit on the most primitive, i.e. the economic level. One of the problems facing the working class in Israel today is the existence of the Histadrut and the lack of industrial unions.

The existence of the Histadrut makes all strikes by sectors of the industrial proletariat wildcat strikes, as the Histadrut being a major owner of capital itself is consciously on the side of the bourgeoisie. A PRIMARY TASK CONFRONTING WORKERS IN ISRAEL IS THE FORMATION OF BINATIONAL INDUSTRIAL UNIONS. One of the foremost demands of such unions would be a demand for the end of the discrimination against and the superexploitation of the Palestinian

workers. In this way the Palestinian workers will see that the Hebrew workers are not interested in maintaining their privileges at the expense of the Palestinian workers. Another task confronting the Israeli workers is the construction of a revolutionary party. Such a party would have to carry out an anti-Zionist perspective and would be in direct opposition to the bourgeois "workers party" Mapai which is based on the Histadrut and functions not in the interests of the Hebrew or Palestinian workers but in the interests of the Hebrew capitalists and to a certain extent even the imperialists. This party would be composed of the vanguard of the Hebrew and Palestinian working class and would participate in the day to day struggles of that class to provide them with revolutionary direction.

Presently there exists no organization in the Israeli left which is capable of playing the role of the vanguard party. Both Communist Parties, Rakah and Maki, play absolutely pernicious roles. This is nothing more than the continuation of the role of the Communist Party before their split. The split was not between a revolutionary faction and a Stalinist faction, but between two factions equally Stalinist in their methodology. Rakah presently follows the line of the Soviet Union to a T. What this means is that they concentrate most of their fire on Israel while supporting the bourgeois Arab regimes. However, they maintain the "correctness" of the Stalinist position in 1948 of support to the Hebrew bourgeoisie. Maki on the other hand supports the left-wing Zionist parties such as Mapam. Both parties are staunch adherents of the Stalinist ideology of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful co-existence."

The Israeli Socialist Organization (*Matzpen*) and the Israeli Socialist Organization (*Matzpen-Marxist*) (Israeli section of the United Secretariat) while being anti-Zionist, have no perspective for winning over the working class in Israel to a revolutionary socialist perspective. Instead they see the revolution as being made

by the Palestinians with some fraternal Hebrew support. Their program for the Hebrews, however, is nothing more than a capitulation to Zionism. Both ISOs call for a de-Zionization of the Israeli state. The concept of the Israeli state as a Zionist state and not a bourgeois state stems from the fact that neither ISO sees mature class structures in Israeli society. The question before the Israeli working class (both Hebrew and Palestinian) is not the de-Zionization of that state, but the smashing of the state and its replacement with a workers' state. A misunderstanding of Palestinian self-determination and an adaptation to Arab nationalism leads both ISOs to call along with the de-Zionization of the Israeli state, for the self-determination of the Hebrew nation. While Marxists do defend the right of the Hebrews as a nation to self-determination, we do not raise the slogan agitationaly. Nor, for that matter, do we agitate around the slogan for Palestinian self-determination. The prime question of the day is not self-determination for this or that nation, but which class will rule society, the working class or the capitalist class. The reason that the ISOs do this is because they see self-determination for the Palestinian nation as a complete reversal of the present situation. That is they see self-determination for the Palestinians resulting in a Palestinian bourgeois state where Israel currently exists. This is also the vision of the future for the Palestinian and pan-Arab nationalists. The ISOs also do not realize that the Palestinian nation has undergone a great change. It is currently dispersed and is undergoing a process of disintegration and assimilation into the other Arab nations.

Besides, for Leninists, Palestinian self-determination means the right of the Palestinian nation to carve out a part of Israel and set up their own state. It means nothing more than that. It is interesting to note here that the Socialist Workers Party criticizes the position of the ISOs concerning Hebrew self-determination *from the right*. They say that self-determination is a one shot deal and that the Hebrews blew it!

Besides the ISO (*Matzpen*) and the

continued on page 37

Archives of the Revolution

November 7, 1917

Proclamation of the Soviet Government

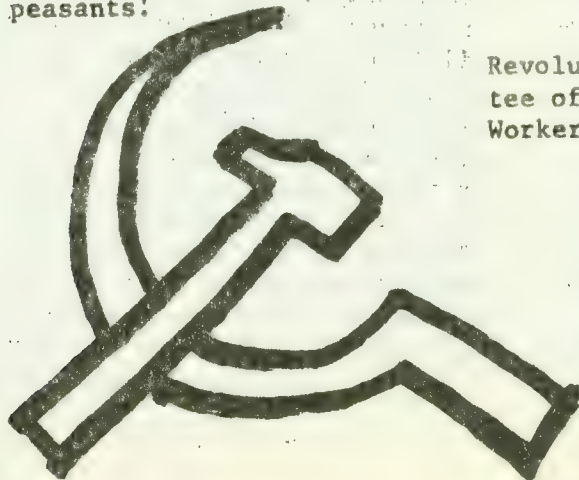
Archives of the Revolution is a regular feature of Workers' Truth. Each month we reprint for the benefit of our readers part or all of a particular speech, article or document from the vast and rich heritage of the revolutionary Marxist movement. In this issue we are reprinting the November 7, 1917 Proclamation of the Soviet Government of Russia. November 7, 1973 marks the fifty-sixth anniversary of the historic Russian Revolution. It marks the fifty-sixth anniversary of the seizure of power in Russia by the Russian working class, led by the revolutionary Bolshevik Party and organized in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. While the workers' state in Russia survived only until the spring of 1921 it still represents the possibilities for the victory of the working class and the destruction of capitalism. The state which calls itself the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and masquerades as socialist and communist is nothing more than another capitalist state. It must be smashed by the Russian workers and replaced with a state of their own. Down with the Russian capitalists! Long live the Russian Revolution! Forward to world socialism!

To the Citizens of Russia!

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The power of state has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Revolutionary Military Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought--the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production and the creation of a Soviet government--is assured.

Long live the revolution of the soldiers, workers, and peasants!



Revolutionary Military Committee of Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

RSL and the Fight for Leninism

The last few years have seen a growing differentiation of views within the American left and the consequent development of a vast number of relatively small groups all vying for the allegiance of the working class. Not since the 1930's has such a multiplicity of socialist groups appeared on the horizon of the American proletariat. The latest group to emerge is the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL). The RSL was expelled from the International Socialists (IS) this past summer and represented, more or less, the left wing of the IS.

Since the RSL claims to be the true inheritors of Leninism, and since it claims to have a correct Marxist analysis of the state capitalist countries (Russia, China, Cuba, etc.), it is necessary for us to make a critique of some of the RSL's views. In so doing, we will expose the RSL and its politics for the centrist fakery that they are.

The September 1973 issue of *The Torch*, the newspaper of the RSL, contains an article by Chris Hudson entitled *The Fight for Leninism*. The article claims that the RSL carried out such a fight within the IS. While the RSL (or the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) as it was known in the IS) may indeed have thought that it was carrying out a fight for Leninism, its attempt to do so was a complete and utter failure.

The RSL states toward the beginning:

The task of the vanguard, in short, is to speak to the working class as a whole and show it what must be done--to "say what is", in Trotsky's phrase.

(*The Torch*, Sept. '73, p. 4)

Hudson then goes on to use this phrase, "say what is," about six or seven times in the next two or three paragraphs. However, does the RSL "say what is?" Do they give the working class a correct and precise analysis of world capitalism today? Do they tell the truth to the working class about what is necessary for them to improve their lot in society? Hardly.

For instance, how does the RSL "say what is" about the state capitalist countries? In the *Manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist League* (where one would surely expect the RSL to "say what is" to the working class) we find in the opening sentence:

Across the world, capitalism and Stalinist class societies have entered a period of sharpening crisis. Neither is capable today of all-round development. (*The Torch*, Sept. '73, p. 4)

Stalinist class societies? Is this "saying what is?" What is a Stalinist class society? Is a Stalinist a class? Stalinist class society could mean anything. It could mean a Stalinist workers' state, Stalinist capitalist society, Stalinist bureau-

cratic collectivist society, Stalinist feudal society, Stalinist slave society! By referring to capitalism and "Stalinist class societies" the RSL infers that the so-called Communist countries are something different than capitalism. What they are, however, the RSL does not make clear. Nor does it seem to make much difference to the RSL, since at the end of Hudson's article we find:

Already, however, a significant step toward such a principled regroupment was made in the course of the fight in the I.S. The Revolutionary Tendency united with the Communist Tendency, which had entered the I.S. a year earlier to fight for a Trotskyist program. Though small in numbers, the Communist Tendency had a great significance as the only principled opposition tendency in years to have emerged from the decrepit Socialist Workers Party.

But the unity between the CT and RT was of even greater significance. Despite theoretical differences over the nature of Stalinism, yet unity was made possible by a common understanding of method, program, and tactics, of the nature of the present epoch and period of capitalism and of the international tasks flowing from it. The comrades of the former Communist Tendency today take their places as leading members of the League.

(*The Torch*, Sept. '73,

How can there be a "common understanding of method, program, and tactics, of the nature of the present epoch and period of capitalism and of the international tasks flowing from it," when the CT holds the orthodox Trotskyist position that Russia is a degenerated workers' state and that China, Cuba, etc. are deformed workers' states, while the RT was moving toward at least a state capitalist label for these countries, although not a correct analysis of state capitalism? How can there be "common understanding of method, program, and tactics, of the nature of the present epoch and period of capitalism and of the international tasks flowing from it," when the CT sees capitalism abolished in one-third of the world, while the RT does not? Obviously someone has to be subordinating their analysis, or there is a little horse-trading going on in the back-room. Either way it means one thing: rotten bloc, not principled regroupment.

In fact, the RSL has not published an analysis of state capitalism. This would not be so bad if they agreed with the fundamentals of the analysis of the organization that they left. However, the IS does not view Russia, China, Cuba, etc. as state capitalist, but as "bureaucratic collectivist." It is the view of the IS that capital-

ism *has* been destroyed in these countries, but that it has been replaced with a new bureaucratic collectivist class. The IS does not show and *can not* show the basic economic laws under which this system functions. Basically their view is that the major problem is bureaucratic mismanagement of the planned economy. That is, their analysis is not much different than the Trotskyist analysis of "degenerated and deformed workers' states." The IS simply doesn't want to draw the same conclusions as the Trotskyists of defense of these countries in time of war. Most articles and pamphlets to date published by the RSL either do not label the Soviet Union, etc. as state capitalist, or in some way attempt to distinguish state capitalism from capitalism in general. This is done by using such machinations as referring to "United States and European imperialism and the state-capitalist imperialism of the USSR." This view of state capitalism as being something different (in any way more than the quantitative concentration and centralization of capital) from capitalism in general, is part of the general misunderstanding of the imperialist epoch and of capitalist production relations which the RSL displays. For instance, the RSL holds that capitalism was not restored in Russia until 1934-38. Where is their proof and analysis to back this up? There was no qualitative

change in productive relations in Russia between 1921 with the introduction of the New Economic Policy (the restoration of capitalism in Russia) and the late thirties. The RSL can only point to changes in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, i.e. the purge of the Bukharinites and others. Commodity production was restored not in 1934, but in 1921. The ruble was restored not in 1934, but in 1921. The market was restored not in 1934, but in 1921. Foreign capital concessions were initiated not in 1934, but in 1921. Wage-labor as opposed to the *class* rationing of goods was restored not in 1934, but in 1921. (See the pamphlet *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Russia* for a detailed analysis of the rise and fall of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia). The RSL, like the Trotskyists the world over, iconize Lenin and Trotsky. To them, since Lenin and Trotsky favored the NEP, it couldn't be the restoration of capitalism. However, the RSL, the Trotskyists and the Stalinists to the contrary notwithstanding, this was the case. And it was because the Russian Communist Party betrayed the working class in 1921 that the following scenario described by Isaac Deutscher occurred:

Often a worker, a veteran of the Red Guards, appeared before his party committee, tore in disgust his member card and threw it in the face of the party secretary. So much was

this a sign of the times that the description of such scenes can be found in many a contemporary novel and party chiefs spoke about them with undisguised anxiety.

(The Prophet Unarmed,
p. 22)

It was the 1921 betrayal of the working class which restored capitalism in Russia, not the purging of a few Communist Party leaders in 1934-38.

Russia is not the only country that illustrates the RSL's fundamental misunderstanding of capitalism. The RSL also fails to grasp the reality of Israeli society. Bending to the vituperations of the Arab nationalists (or perhaps trying to hook up with the Israeli Socialist Organization (*Matzpen*)), the RSL states in the November 1973 issue of *The Torch*:

...Israel is a junior partner of American imperialism and an imperialist state in its own right...

...While the Arab states as well as Israel are tied to world imperialism, it is in a qualitatively different way. Despite all efforts to play one imperialist power against another, they remain tied to world imperialism as the exploited to the exploiter--whereas Israel is tied as the smaller exploiter to the larger. (*The Torch*, Nov. '73, p. 2)

This is pure fantasy. Israel, no less so than the Arab countries, is

exploited by imperialism (see *Revolutionary Perspectives in the Middle East, Part Four* elsewhere in this issue). The fact that Israel is economically and militarily more powerful than its neighbors in the Middle East makes it no more imperialist than India which is also more powerful than Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Ceylon. Expansionism and imperialism are not equivalents. On the Israeli question, just as on the Russian question, the RSL displays not a proletarian Marxist analysis of class productive relations, but a petty bourgeois analysis of strength vs. weakness and blatant exercise of power (purge, conquest, etc.) as the fundamental force in society.

It is not only with their analysis of capitalism that the RSL fails in the fight for Leninism. They likewise fail in the program which they put forward for the class struggle in America. Like all centrist adulators of Trotsky, the RSL places credence in the so-called Transitional Program. Through struggle around the demands of the Transitional Program (some of which are excellent slogans *when used in the context of explicitly calling for a socialist revolution*) the working class will supposedly spontaneously see the need for socialism and revolution. However, this is the direct antithesis of Leninism. Without the vanguard party of the working class *explicitly* bringing the necessity of the socialist revolution

to the fore, even in the course of day to day struggles, the working class will only develop trade union consciousness. This can be seen by the fact that only in Russia, where there existed such a revolutionary Leninist party, has the working class achieved the consciousness necessary for the overthrow of capitalism. Despite the increasing crisis of capitalism, imperialist war, economic hardship and a growing desire on the part of the world proletariat for militant class struggle, the working class has been unable to seize power in any country since it did so in Russia in 1917. This is not because of the lack of working class militancy, but because of the lack of a vanguard party. Revolutionary socialist class consciousness, the consciousness that working class socialist revolution and the destruction of the capitalist order is necessary for the raising of the workers' living standard, must be brought into the working class and its economic struggles from outside those struggles by the vanguard party. Simple struggle around economic demands however "transitional" or even revolutionary, without the *explicit* intervention of the party with the *absolute necessity* of socialist revolution, will lead not to the spontaneous development of revolutionary class consciousness, but to the simple development of trade union consciousness and the consequent

defeat of the working class as the capitalist crisis sharpens and the capitalists wage their own offensive.

The RSL goes one step further to the right. In the document *On the Transitional Program* By RSL National Organizational Secretary Ron Taber, we find:

...the method of the transitional program does not consist of raising the entire program everywhere and always, nor in the "principled" construction of communist caucuses in the unions based on the entire, or 95% of, the Transitional Program.

(p. 20)

While we would agree that caucuses in the unions should not be built on the Transitional Program, it is *not* because we feel that they should be built on some small part of the Transitional Program, but because the Transitional Program is centrist. It can not lead to working class revolution. However, the RSL feels that the Transitional Program is revolutionary. It embraces the Transitional Program as its own. The question is why does the RSL refuse to build caucuses (i.e. organs to struggle for the leadership of the trade unions) on the basis of its own program? Our view of communist work in the trade unions is that outlined by the *Theses on the Trade Union Movement, Factory Councils, and the Communist International*, adopted by the Second

Comintern Congress in 1920:

7. In the epoch of capitalist decay the economic struggle is transformed into a political struggle far more quickly than could have happened in the age of peaceful capitalist development. Any large-scale economic conflict may confront the workers with the question of revolution. It is therefore the duty of communists, at all stages of the economic struggle, to point out to the workers that the struggle can be successful only if the working class defeats the capitalist class in open battle and embarks on the work of socialist construction by means of dictatorship. With this in mind, the communists must try to establish complete unity as widely as possible between the trade unions and the communist party, subordinating the unions to the leadership of the party as the vanguard of the workers' revolution. For this purpose communists must form communist party fractions in all trade unions and factory committees and with their help take over and lead the trade union movement.

The RSL also goes against Leninism in its view on the independent organization of women as women and of Blacks as Blacks. RSL leader Bruce Landau states in *Trotskyism, Centrism, and the International Socialists*:

Given the domination of blacks by whites, wom-

en by men, it is often necessary for blacks and women to organize independently of whites and men in order to engage in struggle and develop political perspectives. Consequently, we may call for and support independent black and women's organizations, depending on the circumstances. This, however, is only the first step. For this organizational independence to produce the necessary political results, revolutionary socialists must fight within those organizations for their program. If they fail, these groups (though organizationally independent) will become politically subordinated to the bourgeoisie and will hold back the struggle for equality and socialism. (p. 11)

This is not Leninism. An organization of women as women or of Blacks as Blacks *can not* be a proletarian organization. This feat is organically impossible due to the fact that women and Blacks exist in all classes. The task of revolutionaries is to organize the working class. While other social strata (middle class, semi-proletarians, small farmers) must be won to the banner of the working class, it is the task of revolutionaries to organize not these peripheral strata, but to organize the working class, the class with the social weight to liberate the masses from capitalist bondage. In addition to this, Leninists consistently fight for the

unity of the working class not only program-matically, but also organizationally. The argument that Blacks are oppressed by whites and women by men, and therefore must organize separately or else their oppression will continue in the working class movement, is not the argument of revolutionary Leninists, but of middle class nationalists and feminists. It is the inverted patronizing chauvinism (both racial and sexual) that women *must* take a back seat to men in a common organization because of their socialization and men's role as oppressors, or that Blacks *must* take a back seat to whites, because of their socialization and whites' oppression of Blacks. On the contrary, Black and women workers, because of their special oppression in society, will be in the forefront of the working class struggles. The task of Leninists is to recruit them to the revolutionary party and to constantly bring forward the unity of the working class. It is not the task of Leninist revolutionaries to encourage separation of the class either by sex or race. The special oppression of Blacks and women must be fought against by the entire working class, male and female, Black and white, *together*.

A concrete example of the RSL's opportunism can be seen in the way they viewed the last United Mineworkers pres-

idential election. Tony Boyle, President of the UMW, was nothing more than a gangster and a thug who hired goons to murder oppositionist Jock Yablonski and his family. In the recent election Boyle was challenged by former rank-and-file miner Arnold Miller. Now, Miller was not your run-of-the-mill rank-and-file miner. He was the darling of the Democratic Party liberals and an outspoken anticommunist. He had even run for office on the Democratic Party ticket in West Virginia. Miller is just as much an agent of the capitalist class as Boyle is. He is simply a little slicker and hasn't had to resort to murder to keep his position. Miller did more, however, than bring in his Democratic Party friends as aides and advisors. He and the Miners for Democracy (MFD) slate went so far as to call on the Labor Dept., i.e. the capitalist state, to intervene in the UMW election and run things. This was out and out subordination of the UMW election to the capitalist state! If the unions are to be developed into true instruments of the working class, i.e. revolutionary instruments, they must be kept completely independent of the state machinery of the capitalist ruling class. All workers must demand that the Labor Dept, the courts and any other state organ stay out of union affairs. Union elections must be run by the union members, not by the capitalist state. The MFD proved

themselves to be fakers as they called on the Labor Dept. to institute "democracy" in the UMW. This is organically impossible. The intervention of the Labor Dept. made the UMW election a sham and a fraud. It was no more a union election than are the elections for the capitalist President, Senate and House of Representatives. UMW members should have refused to honor this government-run election and abstained from voting, demanding a new election run by the miners themselves.

What did the RSL have to say about Miller? In Landau's document we find:

We support the Arnold Miller's *critically*...

(p. 20)

Landau spends over three pages criticising the IS leadership for not criticizing Miller for his reformist program. He goes on to state that Miller had to be supported because the ranks of the UMW supported him, but that Miller's sellout program should have been condemned. Nowhere in this over three pages of writing does Landau find the space to even mention the fact that Arnold Miller CALLED ON THE U.S. GOVT. (THE CAPITALIST STATE) TO RUN THE UMW ELECTION! It is this action on the part of Miller that makes any sort of critical support for him *out of the question for principled Leninists*.

The fundamental misunderstanding of capitalism and the brazen trade union opportunism of the RSL doom it to a non-revolutionary existence.

continued on page 37

...War

continued from page 11

the world will solve the problems of the Hebrew and Arab workers, the problems of wage-slavery, unemployment and speed-up. Without the destruction of capitalism through united working class struggle, the conditions of capitalist exploitation will continue to exist. Only the names and languages of the capitalists might change.

Along with their support to the Arab capitalists, the SWP and the WL call on Russian imperialism to increase its sending of arms to the Arab bourgeoisies. The weapons which the imperialists send to their semi-colonial clients are weapons which will be used in furthering capital's interests against those of the workers. As revolutionary Marxists we oppose all Russian and American military aid to the Middle East belligerents. We remind the SWP and the WL, that the guns which the Egyptian army uses against the Israeli Defense Forces today, will be used against the steelworkers in the Helwan mills tomorrow.

Another error made by the SWP is to see the Palestinian refugees as the primary revolutionary force in the Middle East. However, since the refugees are completely divorced from the means of production they do not have the social weight to exert a revolutionary force. Such a force and such social weight resides only in the working class. SWPers point out that the work-

ing class in the Arab countries is very small.

We can only respond by pointing out that the Russian working class was also a small minority in 1917, but this didn't stop them from taking state power.

Since the proletariat is the only revolutionary class in society, it follows that the Palestinian proletariat in Israel will play a primary role in the socialist revolution in the Middle East. It is necessary for the Palestinian and Hebrew workers in Israel to join together in the formation of industrial unions. A struggle must be waged against the Histadrut, the bourgeois "union" in Israel. Working class industrial unions would have to wage a struggle not only for the economic defense of the Israeli working class as a whole, but also against the special oppression and super-exploitation of the Palestinian and other Arab workers in Israel.

All workers in the Middle East must build revolutionary workers parties joined together in an International Party of Revolutionary Workers to struggle for a Socialist Israel, Socialist Syria, Socialist Egypt, etc. and a Socialist United States of the Middle East.

...Editorial

continued from page 1

BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PARTY OF REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS!

FORWARD TO THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

FORWARD TO THE WORLDWIDE WORKERS' REPUBLIC!

...South America

continued from page 19

the interests of the poor peasants. To the petty bourgeois reformists who say that agrarian reform must be carried out by dividing the land so competition will stimulate growth, we must answer that under socialism the need for food will be enough stimulant. Under socialism the land will not be divided up but rather run in a more centralized manner in which large tracts of land can be used with the minimum of labor through the use of modern technology.

This type of nationalization as with nationalization of industry, transportation, etc. only marks a social (qualitative) change in society when it is carried out by the working class in a socialist revolution. The program of revolutionary Marxism embodied in the program of the Revolutionary Workers Group is the only program which will solve the problems facing the proletariat in Latin America and the rest of the world.

To be Continued

NOTES

- (1) from Bukharin, *Imperialism and World Economy*, pp. 83-84
- (2) *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21
- (3) *Ibid.*, p. 21
- (4) Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, p. 295
- (5) Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America*, p. 258
- (6) Bukharin, *op.cit.*, pp. 73-74, emphasis in original
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 92

...Mid east

continued from page 29

ISO (Matzpen-Marxist) there are two other organizations vying for leadership of the Israeli working class (other than the Rakah and Maki Stalinists). The Revolutionary Communist League (*Struggle*) is a Maoist split from the ISO (M). Like all Maoist organizations, it views state capitalist China as socialist and sees a two-stage revolution where workers must bloc with the bourgeoisie in the first stage and then later struggle for a workers' revolution. However, the time for a workers' revolution is now, not in the far off future. The Vanguard group which is aligned with the "international" based around the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) is also a reformist organization whose major focus is calling for a Constituent Assembly of Palestine. This is wrong on two counts: 1) Palestine does not exist and ceased to exist in 1948 when it was divided up by Israel and Jordan (one might just as well call for a Constituent Assembly of Gaul in France); 2) a constituent assembly is nothing more than a bourgeois parliament. Vanguard calls for this Constituent Assembly to institute a soviet republic, i.e. a workers' republic. However, this is impossible. A bourgeois parliament can not institute a workers' republic. The Constituent Assembly in Russia in

1917 did not institute the Soviet Republic, it was abolished by it! Another small group, a split-off from the RCL (S) is the Red Front. The Red Front is virtually identical to the RCL (S) politically. However, today it has been completely destroyed, with all of its members in prison.

Even though these groups do not have a correct analysis of the situation in Israel and make significant errors in regard to Palestinian nationalism, they do have healthy subjective revolutionaries within them. For instance, the ISO (M) does have one wing which sees the need for turning to the working class with a class struggle program. They do not agree with the majority analysis of the Sephardim as a reactionary lump but see them as we do as a key factor in the coming Israeli revolution. No doubt the initial elements in the Leninist vanguard party in Israel will come out of these organizations. However, they must first develop a Marxist analysis of the general period, the class nature of the Sino-Soviet countries and the tasks of revolutionaries in Israel and throughout the Middle East.

NOTES

- (1) Rodinsin, Maxime, *Israel and the Arabs*, p. 48
- (2) *New York Times*, November 10, 1970

To be Continued

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...Crisis

continued from page 7

from the bonds of capitalism. Then, under the leadership of the revolutionary communist vanguard the working class will expropriate the capitalists, smash their state and destroy their obsolete mode of production. This is the program which Leninists must take into the working class, not the reformist pablum of impeachment, new presidential elections and "limiting" the capitalist state, which flows through the pages of *Workers Vanguard*.

FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS UNDER THE BANNER OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM!

BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PARTY OF REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS!

FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

FORWARD TO THE WORLDWIDE WORKERS' REPUBLIC!

...RSL

continued from page 35

Soon the reformist appetites of the RSL leadership will completely destroy the revolutionary impulses that remain and the RSL will follow their parent organization the IS into the ranks of out and out reformism. The ranks of the RSL must re-examine their short history and be won to the program and analysis of revolutionary Marxism, the program and analysis of the Revolutionary Workers Group, or they will be lost to the swamp like Landy, Landau, Taber and Company.

Fight for Socialism!

The world we live in is a world where people are divided into classes according to their role in production. The two major classes in society are the capitalist class and the working class. The capitalists own the means of production (factories, machines, etc.) but produce nothing. The workers, on the other hand, receive only meager wages for the sale of their labor power to the capitalists. Almost all production in society is done by the workers. However, almost all the benefits from this production go to the capitalists. The basis for production in this society is profit. The capitalists are not interested in having the workers produce things that people can use or that people need. They are only interested in what makes them the biggest profit. Thus, while the capitalists get richer and richer, the workers are worse off than they were before.

In order to increase profits the capitalists resort to all sorts of techniques which most of us are familiar with: speed-ups, wage cuts, unemployment, labor-saving machinery. While, for instance, labor-saving machinery would be progressive in a society run by the workers, it does nothing for them under capitalism. It is just another attack on the workers.

Another feature of capitalist society is war. Every day there is a war going on somewhere in the world. This is due to the necessity of the capitalists to wage war in order to get ahead of capitalists in other countries. The working class has no interests in supporting these wars. What the workers want is peace. However, there can be no peace until the capitalists have been removed from power and this society replaced with one run by the workers in the interests of the toiling masses.

To do this, it is not enough to elect people to Congress or as President. The government is nothing more than the executive committee of the ruling class.

It is the owners of the big corporations who have the final say as to what goes on. It is necessary to organize our own workers' councils. These councils will be the class rule of the workers against the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. When capitalism goes Congress will go with it. All the democracy surrounding the Congress is just a sham to

keep us tied to this system. It is democracy for the rich, for the capitalists. Our democracy will be real democracy, proletarian democracy, the democracy of the many. We do not simply want a workers' government, we want a workers' republic.

In order to throw out the capitalists and build a workers' republic and socialism the working class needs a revolutionary party. Such a party must be based on *The Communist Manifesto*, the first two Congresses of the Communist (Third) International, and the revolutionary work of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg. It must be a democratic-centralist party. However, it is not enough to build such a party here in the United States. Capitalism is a world system. Even so-called "Communist" Russia and China are capitalist (state capitalist). In order to wage a successful worldwide struggle against capitalism the workers must have an international party. It is toward the construction of the International Party of Revolutionary Workers (Fourth International) that the Revolutionary Workers Group and *Workers' Truth* are dedicated.

In 1917 the Russian workers seized power under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and Lenin. However, the revolution was isolated and the Russian workers exhausted from the hard struggle in a backward country lost power when the Bolsheviks lost faith in the world proletariat in 1921. The four years of the revolutionary dictatorship still remain, however, as a beacon for workers throughout the world.

Under capitalism the workers are nothing more than menials. We deserve a better life. We deserve socialism. However, it will not be handed to us on a platter. We must fight for it. For if we do not fight for socialism we will be handed barbarism. Socialism or barbarism?

Fight for Socialism!

